1978

UA19/17/1/4 1978 Hilltopper Football

WKU Athletic Media Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records

Part of the African American Studies Commons, Journalism Studies Commons, Mass Communication Commons, and the Sports Studies Commons

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR. It has been accepted for inclusion in WKU Archives Records by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.
1977 RESULTS

Overall Record: 14-1
OVC Record: 1-5 (8th)
Opponent (Crowd) WKU-Opp.
UT-Chattanooga (16,500) ... 3-27
at Akron (31,792) ... 3-24
at Austin Peay (8,600) ... 3-21
East Tennessee (10,500) ... 3-13
at Northern Michigan (5,346) ... 0-39
Tennessee Tech (13,500) ... 20-31
at Eastern Kentucky (26,000) ... 0-35
Morehead State (19,750) ... 20-20
at Middle Tennessee (2,800) ... 20-20
Murray State (11,700) ... 13-21
Attendance—144,885 (Home-71,950; Avg.-14,390)

1977 ALL-OVC SELECTIONS

NCAA DIVISION II AND II LEADERS IN ALL-TIME WINNING PERCENTAGE

Coach JIMMY FEIX

The 1978 season will be Jimmy Feix's 11th year as head coach of the Hilltoppers, but his name has been closely connected with winning football at Western Kentucky for much longer than that. His association with Western gridiron success began in September, 1949, when he came to the campus as a freshman quarterback from Henderson, Ky. By his senior year, 1952, he and his Hilltopper teammates won almost everything in sight. They tied for the Ohio Valley Conference championship and added a Refrigerator Bowl win over Arkansas State to finish with a 9-1 record. At the same time Feix was earning Little All-America honors for himself. When his collegiate playing days were over, the New York Giants of the National Football League drafted him, expecting him to become the back-up quarterback for Pro Bowl starter Charlie Conerly. Feix was impressive in pre-season drills with the Giants, but a serious injury early that fall ended his pro career.

In 1952 Feix set Western and OVC records with 1,546 yards total offense and 1,281 yards passing. His conference total offense record was unbroken until 1964 and his passing mark stood until the 1965 season.

Feix returned to Western in 1957 after four years of service in the U.S. Air Force. He served as a graduate assistant that first year while completing the requirements for the Master of Arts degree, than became a full-time member of the Western staff the following season.

Feix was named head coach in December, 1967, when Denes retired from active coaching. In 1968, his "rookie" season as head coach, Feix led Western to seven wins against only two losses and a tie with nationally ranked— and bowl-bound—Akron. In 1970, only twice have Feix's teams suffered more than three losses in a single season or finished lower than second place in an OVC race. His Hilltoppers have won or shared the coveted league championship four times, in 1970, 1971, 1973, and 1975.

His 1973 team was the first undefeated, untied team in Western history finishing the regular season with a perfect 10-0 record while leading the nation's Division II teams in scoring at 37.7 points per game. The '73 Hilltoppers entered the first-ever NCAA Division II national championship playoffs and finished second. They defeated Lehigh and Grambling before losing to Louisiana Tech in the national title game at the Camellia Bowl at Sacramento, Calif., winding up the season with an overall 12-1-0 record.

Western went to the NCAA playoffs again in 1975 and again finished as the No. 2 team in the nation, damping Northern Iowa and New Hampshire before being edged by Northern Michigan in the finals at Sacramento and finishing 11-0.

Feix's Hilltoppers were named Kodak College Division Coach-of-the-Year for Division Four in both 1973 and 1975. He also won OVC Coach-of-the-Year honors and was honored similarly by the Louisville Courier-Journal and Inside Kentucky Sports magazine in 1977.

Feix goes into the 1978 campaign with a career coaching record of 71 wins against only 30 losses and 5 ties, for a winning percentage of .693. His 10 Hilltopper teams have won 207 games, lost 132 and tied 2 in Ohio Valley Conference competition, a 60% percentage.

A frequent lecturer at football clinics, Feix has been a primary influence in the organization and continuation of the activities of Western's chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

He is married to the former Frankie Biggers. They have two sons, Jimmy, 24, a former member of Western's varsity baseball team, and Jeff, 17.
Coming off last year's 1-8-1 record, the 1978 football season ranks as a rebuilding year for Western Kentucky's Hilltoppers. But WKU Head Coach Jimmy Feix and his coaching staff actually started that rebuilding job well before the 1977 campaign ended.

The Hilltoppers, for example, finished last season with five freshmen and three sophomores among their 11 offensive starters. While Western had been disappointed in its offensive production for most of last fall, Feix says, "we were pleased with our offense over the last three games of the season. What we're shooting for this year is a continuation of the progress we showed then."

The Hilltoppers went to a twin-tailback set in their offensive backfield last season. "We're going to take a look this spring to see if we have the personnel that will allow us to go back to a fullback-oriented offense," Feix explained, "but if we had to open the season tomorrow, we'd still be going with the tw-tailback situation."

The tailback candidates would include veteran Jimmy Woods, back for his senior season, and sophomores Nate Jones and Craig Freeman, both of whom showed promise in '77. Woods had 906 yards rushing last fall, while Freeman and Jones had 167 and 154, respectively.

The offense shows two proven performers in Eddie Preston at quarterback and Biff Madison, the Ohio Valley Conference's Defensive Player of the Year in 1976. Those two, plus Craig Freeman, both of whom showed promise in '77. Woods had 906 yards rushing last fall, while Freeman and Jones had 167 and 154, respectively.

The offense shows two proven performers in Eddie Preston at quarterback and Biff Madison, the Ohio Valley Conference's Defensive Player of the Year in 1976. Those two, plus Craig Freeman, both of whom showed promise in '77.

The Hilltoppers have a backup quarterback in John Hall, a sophomore this fall. The tailback candidates would include veteran Jimmy Woods, back for his senior season, and sophomores Nate Jones and Craig Freeman, both of whom showed promise in '77. Woods had 906 yards rushing last fall, while Freeman and Jones had 167 and 154, respectively.

The Hilltoppers have a backup quarterback in John Hall, a sophomore this fall. The tailback candidates would include veteran Jimmy Woods, back for his senior season, and sophomores Nate Jones and Craig Freeman, both of whom showed promise in '77. Woods had 906 yards rushing last fall, while Freeman and Jones had 167 and 154, respectively.

The Hilltoppers have a backup quarterback in John Hall, a sophomore this fall. The tailback candidates would include veteran Jimmy Woods, back for his senior season, and sophomores Nate Jones and Craig Freeman, both of whom showed promise in '77. Woods had 906 yards rushing last fall, while Freeman and Jones had 167 and 154, respectively.