

## Football player looks back on early '70s Spoon credits Elon football for his success

**Chuck Walker**  
Staff Reporter

Of the many things that Elon College has, one is definitely a rich football tradition, which includes two national championships, numerous South Atlantic Conference titles, and other various accomplishments.

The players who have played for Elon, could make any who's who list, from Rich McGeorge to Jerry Tolley to Red Smith to Bobby Hedrick and the list goes on.

One such player who played a part in the Elon football success is Tommy Spoon. Spoon was a member of the Elon football team from 1970-1973 and a graduate of the Class of '74.

Spoon, who played tight-end for the Fightin' Christians, was most impressed with the coaching staff Elon had at the time he was a player.

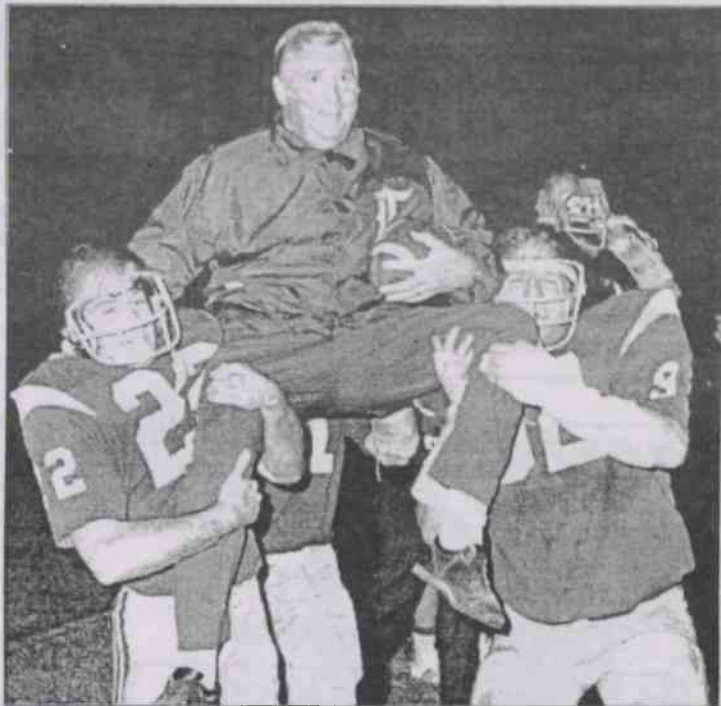
"We had a tremendous coaching staff at Elon when I played," Spoon said. "Red Wilson, who went on to become the head coach at Duke, was the head



Courtesy of Williams High School  
Tommy Spoon

coach. Coach Brown who is now back at Elon, Clay Johnson who went on to be the head coach at Newberry. Jerry Tolley, who led Elon to two national championships as head coach, is now the Mayor of Elon College.

"All four years that I spent getting to know them was the greatest. We had great personnel. I



Courtesy of Sports Information  
Spoon contributes his success to former Elon coach "Red" Wilson.

think coach Wilson got the program started in the right direction."

One of Spoon's fondest memories of his playing days was when the 1973 team played in the national championship game against Abilene Christians, which had a whole slew of stars that went on to NFL fame.

"We played Abilene Christian in the national championship game and we got beat 42-21," Spoon said. "They had Clint Longley at quarterback, who went on to play for the Dallas Cowboys. They had Wilbur Montgomery at running back, who went on to star for the Philadelphia Eagles. And they had Randall "Tex" Cobb, who went on to be a professional boxer and actor.

"When Montgomery ran a sweep and blew by Brent Sexton, one of our best defensive players who was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers, we knew we were in trouble.

Spoon said he thought the time he spent at Elon playing football prepared him for the future.

"It gave me discipline," Spoon said of his time at Elon. "I think you learn to budget your time

wisely. Because football in college is year round."

Spoon also had advice for the current student athletes who are attending Elon right now.

"My advice is to do the best you can. Because before you know it, it's over. Make the most of your time while you are there, because sooner or later it's going to end. When things get tough, look and see how many people would give anything to trade places with you."

Spoon is the athletic director at Williams High School in Burlington and is also the defensive coordinator of the Bulldog football team. Spoon said that there are good times and bad times that come with the job, but overall he is enjoying it.

"I enjoy the job, because I like to see things develop and grow," Spoon said. "There is a lot more to the job than people see. An athletic director is here at the school from sunup to sundown. There are good moments and bad moments, but with the good coaching staff that we have here at Williams, we've got it made."

This Week's Games	SAC Scores	SAC Standing
Gardner-Webb at Elon (2 p.m.)	Lenoir-Rhyne 45, Newberry 3	Elon 2-3
Wingate at Presbyterian (2:30 p.m.)	Carson-Newman 41, Gardner-Webb 21	Lenoir-Rhyne 4-0
Mars Hill at Charleston Southern (1:30 p.m.)	Mars Hill 35, Presbyterian 17	Carson-Newman 5-1
Carson-Newman at Lenoir-Rhyne (7:30 p.m.)	Wofford 37, Wingate 22	Mars Hill 4-1
Catawba at Newberry (2 p.m.)	Liberty 37, Catawba 12	Gardner-Webb 1-3
		Wingate 1-3
		Presbyterian 1-4
		Catawba 1-4

## Football Player Profile

### Gentilcore leads by example

**Bud Hoopes**  
Staff Reporter

One of this year's quiet and determined leaders of the Fightin' Christians is Tony Gentilcore.

Gentilcore, a 6-foot-1-inch, 225 pound inside linebacker from Clearwater, Fla. is an experienced player and leader who lets his performance on the field do the talking.

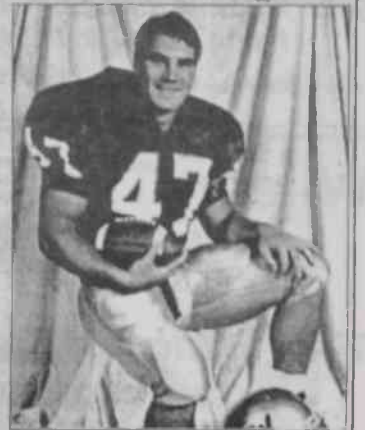
"Tony is a physical player who brings good size and strength to the inside linebacker position and that size and strength is a big asset to the defensive line," defensive coordinator Larry Stephens said.

Gentilcore is majoring in leisure sports management. After graduating in the fall of 1995, he wants to find a job that keeps him on the move.

"I'd like to find a job that has to do with some kind of sport. Hopefully, I'll go into managing a health club or something like that," Gentilcore said. "I can't work behind a desk."

On his off time, Gentilcore enjoys waterskiing and frisbee golf.

Gentilcore says that he hasn't had any big influences growing up but lists linebacker coach Leo Barker as one person who has had a big impact on him as a player. "Coach Barker is the only one



Courtesy of Sports Information  
Tony Gentilcore

throughout highschool and college that has been able to put a leash on me. He's the only one that's figured me out the most and if he tells me to do something or be somewhere, I'm there or else." Gentilcore said.

"Each time Tony goes out there he gives me 100 percent," Barker said. "Tony plays hard and if he does that, that's great in my eyes and that's all I ask from anyone. Tony's experience has helped him come a long way."

Besides Barker, Gentilcore lists that the "people who said he couldn't make it" as his incentive for always doing his best on and off the field. This "group" made Gentilcore feel like "maybe I can play hard and prove them wrong."

In opponents' minds, he has done just that.



### Schedule of Events

- Oct. 27 Volleyball vs. St. Augustine's College (HOME) 6:30 p.m.
- Oct. 28 Men's Soccer vs. Presbyterian College (HOME) 2 p.m.
- Oct. 29 Volleyball vs. Francis Marion University (HOME)  
Men's and Women's Cross Country Food Lion SAC Meet Mars Hill  
Women's Soccer Food Lion SAC Tournament (HOME) noon and 2 p.m.  
Football vs. Gardner-Webb University (HOME) 2 p.m.
- Oct. 30 Women's Soccer Food Lion SAC Tournament 2 p.m. (HOME)
- Nov. 1 Men's Soccer Food Lion SAC Tournament Higher Seed 2 p.m.
- Nov. 2 Volleyball vs. Queens College (away) 6:30 p.m.

**McEWEN 7 X 94** Students must have a valid Fall '94 sticker on Student ID for admission to sports events.