

molded the team to reflect the way he played the game.

"I was an intense player," he says. "I think I'm an intense coach and that I have an intense team. These guys don't have any quit in them. You can see the intensity in the way they play."

And, although Little isn't surprised at the success he's had as a collegiate coach, he says he hadn't exactly planned on coaching college football.

"I hadn't really thought about going into coaching," says Little. "When the position became open, I decided to go back to my alma mater -- a school that had always been good to me.

"I felt that anything I could do to help Bethune-Cookman, I would do it," he says.

With no previous coaching experience, Little says, he knew there would be pressure. Yet, he felt confident he could do the job.

"I knew that I could get the most out of the players," Little says. "I thought I could take a group of youngsters and mold them into a unit. Most young guys just need someone to motivate them and I felt that I could handle it."

First on his agenda when he accepted the post was evaluating the talent on hand. Little found enough to have a successful season. He also found some exceptional athletes that he needed to get as much out of as possible.

In Bernard Hawk, Little saw a true field general who was capable of spearheading a strong passing game. Wide receiver Leon Gonzales added the perfect complement.

"With a quarterback like Bernard Hawk, I thought that we could throw the football against anyone," Little says. "Most college teams can't defend against the pass very well, so we decided to be a passing team."

As a member of the world champion Miami Dolphins, however, Little was most familiar with a grind-it-out style of offense. So he set out to find an offensive coordinator who had a strong background in passing. He came up with Rick Stockstill, a 26-year-old former standout passer with Florida State.

"Rick is a fine young coach who has done an outstanding job for us," says Little. "His background made him an ideal candidate for the job."

Upon further inspection of the players he inherited, Little saw the potential for a strong team right away. But, he wasn't surprised at the ability of the players that had matriculated at the private, Methodist college.

"There's always been a mystique about Bethune-Cookman," says Little. "Although there aren't many students, we've always been able to get good people. We don't have the facilities that some of the larger schools have,

but we always have competitive football teams.

"That's something that has carried on over the years," he says. "We struggle, but we get by."

While the passing combination of Hawk to Gonzales gets the most headlines, Little is most pleased with his offensive line.

"Our offensive line has to be the key to the team," he says. "That's one of our strongest areas overall. We've only had 10 quarterback sacks in the past two years.

Another of the team's strong suits is the receiving corps led by all-MEAC senior Gonzales. "I expect he'll go no later than the third round in the NFL draft," Little says of the fleet receiver.

Of course, the Wildcats' catalyst is Hawk, the strong-armed, quick-footed signal-caller.

"Anything he does positively doesn't surprise me," says Little. "He's maturing and coming into his own. I think he's one of the finest passers in college football."

While the Wildcats rely mostly on their passing game, their running attack has come along well this season. Leading the ground game for B-CC is



The Teacher, The Student

Coach Larry Little, below left, has plenty to smile about in '84, including record-setting junior quarterback Bernard Hawk (photos by Joe Daniels).

King Green, a transfer from Iowa State. But James Graham and Reggie Rucker also see considerable playing time.

Defensively, Bethune-Cookman has had its share of problems.

"We have a couple of big guys up

Perhaps the biggest change between the team Bethune-Cookman put on the football field two years ago and this year's team is pride, a quality that Little radiates and that apparently is contagious.

"Coach Little really motivates us,"

"Sometimes when we're down he'll tell us about his playing days and it'll get us all fired up."

Though Little says his job at Bethune-Cookman is to produce winning football teams, he also says there are other lessons to be learned away from the gridiron.

"I want all my guys to have good character," says Little, whose articulate voice belies his massive frame. "I'm not just a coach for now, but their coach for life.

"Football has helped me discipline myself," he says. "It has helped me maintain a certain coolness when things don't go my way, and that's what I try to teach my players. I try to teach them how to carry themselves as young men. We have a good rapport, but they know that I'm a strict disciplinarian."

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-- Larry Little

front that anchor the defense," says Little. "But we need more quickness. We've played a lot of young guys on defense because of some early injuries.

"I'm pleased with our effort, though," Little says. "We have some hustling football players on defense."

says Hawk, the Wildcats' offensive leader. "We've always had talent, but it took Coach Little to change our attitude about winning. He knows how to give us a lift when we need it.

"He has taught us to set goals and go after them," says Hawk.