

# ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

***ATHLETICS***

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## **TECH FOOTBALL PLACES FOUR PLAYERS ON ALL-GSC FOOTBALL TEAM**

**RUSSELLVILLE, Arkansas** – Arkansas Tech Wonder Boys Football placed four players on the All-Gulf South Conference Football Team released by the league office in Birmingham, Ala., on Thursday.

The All-GSC team is selected by the league's head coaches and the coaches were not allowed to vote for their own players.

Tech had four players selected, including three First-Team selections. The Wonder Boys selected as first team selections were senior offensive tackle **Jeremy Ashcraft** (Marshall, Texas), junior center **Torrence Wright** (Sulphur Springs, Texas) and senior punter **Michael Podobnik** (Frankfort, Ill.), while the lone second team selection was senior receiver **Tracey Stiger** (Russellville, Ark.).

Podobnik was repeat first team selections from last season, while Wright and Ashcraft moved up to the first team this year after being second team honorees in 2007 and Stiger was a repeat second team selection this season.

North Alabama led the way with 16 overall selections, including nine First-Team honorees. Two-time defending GSC Champion Delta State had 10 honorees overall, including seven first team selections. Arkansas-Monticello and Henderson State had seven overall selections, while Ouachita Baptist and Valdosta State added six honorees overall and Harding had five overall selections. Southern Arkansas had three selections and was followed by West Alabama with two selections and West Georgia had one selection.

As for the individual honors handed out by the league, Arkansas-Monticello sophomore quarterback Scott Buisson was named the GSC's Offensive Player of the Year, while Delta State junior linebacker Lardester Hicks-Green was named the league's Defensive Player of the Year and Delta State Head Coach Ron Roberts repeated as the GSC Coach of the Year. In addition, Southern Arkansas running back and Valdosta State quarterback Chris Hart were named Co-GSC Offensive Freshmen of the Year, while Delta State defensive back Dominique Davenport was named the GSC's Freshman Defensive Player of the Year. Buisson was named the league's GSC Freshman of the Year last season.

With Tech's three first-team selections this season, the Wonder Boys have now had 26 different players named First-Team All-GSC selections since joining the league in 1995.

**Ashcraft**, who was named as a first team offensive tackle, started all 10 games for the Wonder Boys in 2008 and averaged a grade of 81 percent for the season. In addition, Ashcraft led the Wonder Boys with 78 knockdown blocks and

had 13 pancake blocks and helped Tech's offensive line just allow eight sacks in 10 games.

**Podobnik** repeats as the first team punter this season after finishing second in the GSC with a 44 yard punting average. In 10 games this season, Podobnik, who was a unanimous Preseason All-American, punted 24 times for 1,057 yards and had four touchbacks and downed five punts inside the 20-yard line. In addition, he had five punts travel more than 50 yards, including a season-high 60 yard punt against Central Missouri. In his two years at Tech, Podobnik set a new career punting mark with a 44.8 yard average, which bettered the old mark of 39.7 held by former Wonder Boy **Tommy Edwards** (2000-03). Along with his punting this season, Podobnik was also 30-for-31 on extra point attempts and was 3-for-4 on field goals, including hitting game-winning field goals in back-to-back games against West Alabama and Arkansas-Monticello.

**Wright**, who moved up to the first team this season, played in and starting all 10 games this past season at center. On the season, Wright had an average grade of 85 and recorded 53 knockdown blocks and had 10 pancakes. In addition, he helped anchor a Tech offensive line that allowed just eight sacks in 10 games, which was tied for third in all of NCAA D-II Football.

Stiger, who named a second team selection as a receiver for the second consecutive season, finished the year with a single-season school record 65 receptions for 695 yards and averaged 10.7 yards per reception and 69.5 receiving yards per game. In addition, he also caught five touchdown passes to tie the school's career touchdown reception mark of 21 and also returned 15 kickoffs for 334 yards and averaged 22.3 yards/return and averaged 123.3 all-purpose yards per game. Along with holding the school's career mark for single-season receptions, he also holds the school's career mark in receptions with 163 and also all-purpose yards (4,754) and also holds the school and GSC career mark for kickoff returns (94) and kickoff return yardage (2,048).

Joining Wright and Ashcraft on the All-GSC first team offense was Buisson, Delta State running back Trevar Deed, North Alabama running back Mike McClendon, Henderson State receiver Garrett Manning, Ouachita Baptist receiver Julius Pruitt, Ouachita Baptist tight end Bob Ruffing and North Alabama receivers Rocky Coleman and Ed Gant. Other first team offensive team members were Harding guard Ross Conn, North Alabama guard Sam Hathorn, West Alabama guard Jon Weinreich and Delta State tackle Mark Ellis.

On defense, the first team honorees were Hicks-Green, Delta State defensive lineman Justin Halas, North Alabama defensive linemen Derrick Chatman and Montrel Craft, along with Valdosta State defensive lineman Demario Jones, Delta State linebacker Anthony King, North Alabama linebacker Michael Johnson, West Alabama linebacker Garry Pack, Delta State defensive back Dominic Spinks, Henderson State defensive back Devon Hughes, North Alabama defensive back David Raymond and Valdosta State defensive back Sherard Reynolds.

Podobnik was joined on the All-GSC First-Team Special Teams by North Alabama kicker Tom Schneider, Henderson State return specialist Greg Godfrey, Delta State blocking team member Kyle Van Ness, Harding blocking team member Daniel Phipps and Henderson State blocking team member Michael Buse.

Stiger was joined in the second-team offensive unit by North Alabama quarterback A.J. Milwee, Arkansas-Monticello running back Johnny Polite, Ouachita

Baptist running back K.J. Johnson, Southern Arkansas running back Chris Metcalf, Arkansas-Monticello receiver Clarence Denmark, Delta State receiver Chad Schroeder, Harding receiver Kurt Adams, Valdosta State receiver Albert Dukes, North Alabama tight end Brandon Alldredge, Delta State center Pete Vaesau, Arkansas-Monticello guard Joe Wilson, Henderson State guard Louis West, Arkansas-Monticello tackle John Meadows and North Alabama tackle Michael Hathorn.

The second team defensive unit features Henderson State defensive lineman Michael Castillo, Henderson State defensive lineman Nick Finley, Ouachita Baptist defensive lineman Jerry McNeil, Southern Arkansas defensive lineman Ryan Terry, Arkansas-Monticello linebacker Larry White, Harding linebacker Sevohn Greer, North Alabama linebacker Larry Wilson, Ouachita Baptist linebacker Terrence Garrett, Southern Arkansas linebacker Steven Danenhauer, Valdosta State linebacker Larry Dean, Arkansas-Monticello defensive back Augustus Ashley, Ouachita Baptist defensive back Antwon Thompson and North Alabama defensive back tandem of Bobby Brooks and Darren Dampier.

On special teams, the second team consists of Harding kicker Ryan Ferrell, North Alabama punter Will Batson, Valdosta State Jack Fulford, West Georgia punter Jared Guberman, Delta State return specialist Chad Schroeder and Valdosta State blocking team member Joey Farmer.

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