

# MIZZOU-RAH MIZZOU-RAH MIZZOU-RAH TIGERS!

When Al Onofrio was interviewed for the head football coaching job at Mizzou, the Athletic Committee first talked in terms of a three-year commitment. The veteran Tiger assistant wouldn't buy that. It takes at least four years, he said, to establish a program.

Now in his third season, the Onofrio timetable seems to be on schedule. The disastrous 1-10 first year was followed by last season's amazing 6-6 turnaround in which the Tigers lost two or three they probably should have won, but won a couple they figured to lose. The back-to-back upsets of Notre Dame and Colorado generally are regarded as two of the biggest victories in Missouri's long and illustrious football history. And when the Tigers went on to appear in the Fiesta Bowl, it marked the first time in anybody's football history that a 1-10 team followed up with a bowl bid the very next season.

The 1973 squad appears to be the most talented yet. There is considerable depth. There is a healthy balance between youth and experience. But Onofrio is at least as pleased with team spirit. During spring practice, he says, the players "continued where they left off in December in improving on a fine attitude." Onofrio himself seems to have grown as a head coach in his third year. He is more assured, more in control, even exudes a quiet confidence concerning the upcoming season. And the Onofrio attitude, of course, rubs off on the rest of the coaching staff, on the players, and even on the fans.

After a season of so-so attendance—a 46,000 home average, the lowest in several years—the fans are coming back. Already the September 15 home opener with Mississippi, as well as the traditional clashes with Oklahoma and Nebraska, appear to be sellouts. (The contest against the other Big Eight team that most persons figure will be a contender, Colorado, will be played at Boulder.) Even the reasonable Mizzou fan thinks in terms of a 7-4 season.

Part of the reason for fan optimism was the spring intrasquad game, the best in several years. But Onofrio points out that such contests can be deceiving. Some years good spring games have been followed by average seasons, and the 1965 Tigers—one of the finest teams in the Dan Devine era—performed terribly in the intrasquad clash.

Two things spring practice did disclose for sure, however, were new alignments for both the offense

and defense. After a year of the wishbone, the Tigers will return to a power-I offense, and after more than a decade of the wide-end-six defense, Mizzou adopts a five-man line with zone pass coverage.

"We hope this defensive adjustment will enable us to ease the pressure on our players up front," Onofrio says, "so they can play tough, reckless football, yet still be sound against all running plays. We still will use basically a reading defense, however, one that incorporates many of the techniques of our former alignment."

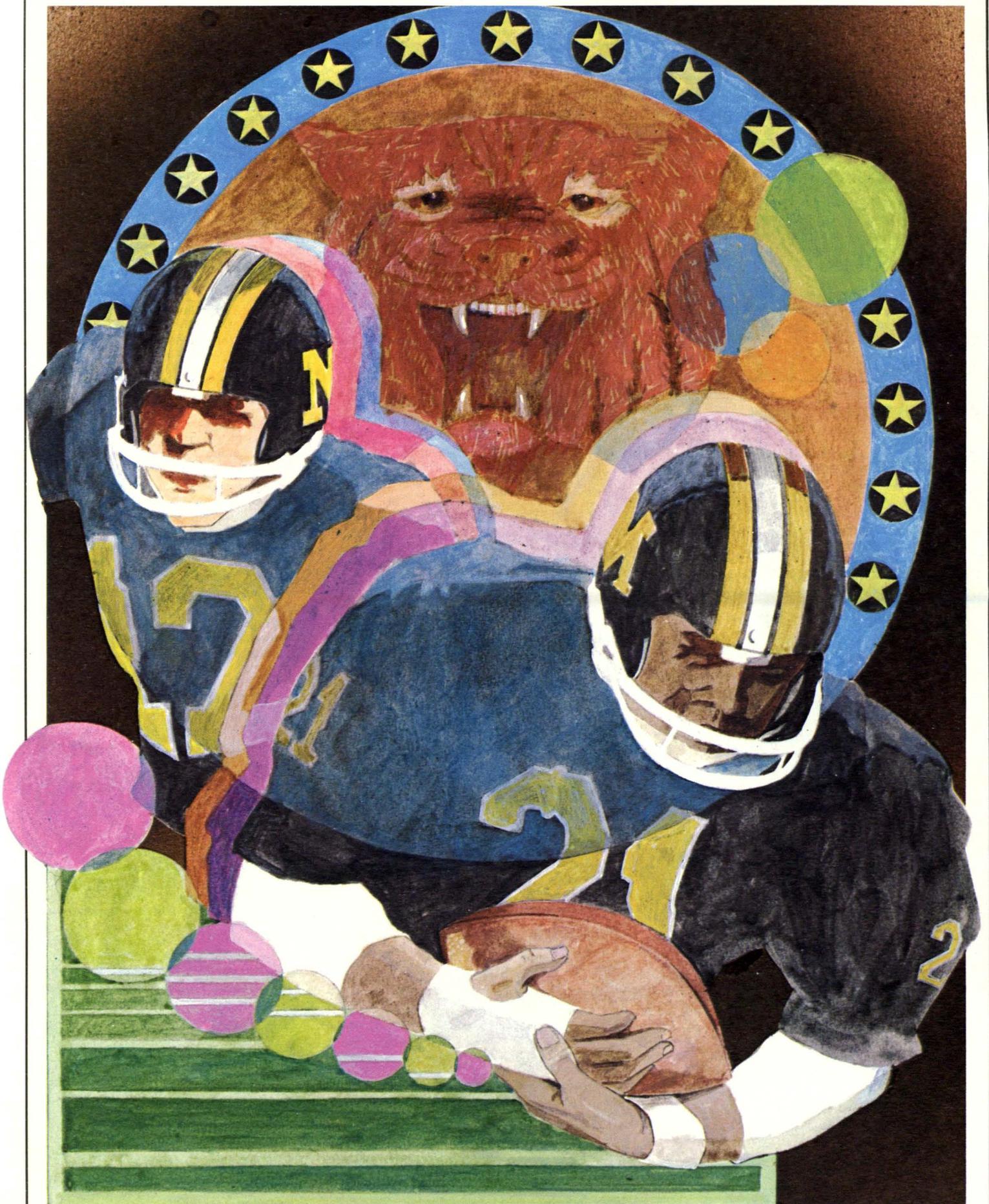
Assistant Head Coach Clay Cooper, who spends much of his time with the defensive backs, can see three distinct advantages in the zone. "First of all, you involve more people in your pass defense. Next you present an alignment that is tougher to throw against, and your chances for interception are greater. Finally—and this was most surprising to me—the zone provides much better support against the rushing game because now you're watching the quarterback."

In the Tigers' new offensive deployment, the fullback and tailback will be positioned behind the quarterback while the slotback will be at the fullback's depth directly behind the tackle on the split-end side.

"This formation gives us the lead block quarterback option that was so effective out of the wishbone last year," Onofrio points out. "From the power I, we also will run the I-slot and I-flanker, putting strong emphasis on both the running and passing games."

With good backfield depth and an experienced offensive line (see personnel analysis on next page), the Tigers should be able to move the ball. There is some concern at center because of inexperience. Scott Anderson has moved over from guard, and the talented senior was named to the *Playboy* pre-season all-American team. If the magazine can pick football players as well as it can girls for the centerfold, then that concern is groundless. The punting game must be rebuilt, and the coaches would like to have more speed at the flanks. Here, some freshmen may help.

Not on the charts, but counted on heavily in Tiger plans is placekicker Greg Hill. It was his talented toe that provided the margins for last season's victories over Notre Dame, Colorado, Iowa State and Oregon. — *Steve Shinn.*



Tommy Reamon takes a handoff from quarterback John Cherry

# The Players

## Quarterbacks

*JOHN CHERRY	6-0	200 Sr.
RAY SMITH	6-2	200 Jr.
STEVE PISARKIEWICZ	6-3	210 So.

The signal-calling position appears solid. Cherry performed well as a wishbone quarterback last season, but should be more at home in the I. That was the formation he ran in junior college to set a record for total yardage gained. Smith, a junior college transfer who sat out last season, had a pleasing spring practice, throwing adequately and running the option exceptionally well. Pisarkiewicz has a great arm—some say the best since the legendary Paul Christman (sound familiar?)—but needs to improve his running. Big and rugged, all three also are good leaders.

## Tailbacks

*TOMMY REAMON	5-11	190 Sr.
*LEROY MOSS	5-8	195 Sr.
CHRIS HOSKINS	5-11	195 So.
BILL MARX	5-10	185 So.

Reamon shows signs of maturing. The highly touted junior college all-American started slowly as a Tiger last fall, picked up speed at season's end, but really came alive this spring. There is no question that the power-I suits him better than the wishbone. The coaches are especially pleased with his attitude. Tommy was a big asset during the recruiting period. Moss also had a good spring and a tremendous spring game. But he also had a good spring in 1972, then, except for the Notre Dame game, was not impressive in the fall. Hoskins still is learning, but he made pleasing progress during spring practice. His speed and quickness—he has a 6.2 forty-yard dash in track—make him a legitimate breakaway threat. Marx was the leading ground gainer in the spring game. Not too big or fast, he simply gains yards. Bill Ziegler, slated to start at slotback, also can run out of the tailback if needed. He may be; the tailback takes a lot of pounding and the Tiger corps is not especially big.

## Fullbacks

*RAY BYBEE	6-0	200 Jr.
*TOM MULKEY	6-0	205 Jr.
*RICKY COOK	5-11	200 Jr.
MIKE HOPKINS	6-2	215 So.

Fast, quick, and strong, Bybee was last season's second leading ground gainer for the Tigers, behind Reamon. Bybee comes back this fall after apparently successful knee surgery. Mulkey is the best blocker among the fullbacks, but he lacks speed. Cook, brother of former Mizzou star, Greg, is a solid ballplayer. Hopkins is not yet ready, will have to get tougher to help. There is some concern, not shared by Onofrio, that the Tiger fullbacks lack the size to block effectively out of the I-formation. But, then, a Jim Harrison doesn't come along every season.

\*Indicates number of years lettered.



Greg Hill

## Slotbacks

*BILL ZIEGLER	6-2	205 Jr.
**CHUCK LINK	5-10	180 Sr.
RANDY GROSSART	6-0	185 So.

Nagging injuries kept Ziegler from reaching the potential he suggested as a freshman. A strong runner, pass receiver and a blocker, he is clearly the front runner at slotback. Link, who often makes the big play despite his lack of size and speed, comes back after a knee operation. Grossart, who has good speed, has been shifted to slotback after spending most of the spring in the defensive secondary. Two freshmen, Steve Mally of Chicago and Pete Blake of St. Louis, also are mid-season possibilities. Both are sprinters.



Jim Schnletz

## Split Ends and Flankers

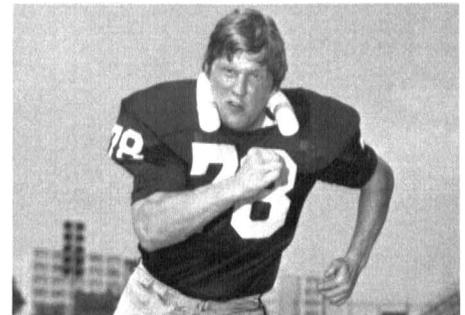
*HENRY MARSHALL	6-3	195 So.
*JIM SHARP	5-10	180 Sr.
MARK MILLER	6-2	185 So.
TED BECKETT	6-1	190 So.

None of this quartet has blinding speed, although Sharp, who played with Cherry in junior college, and Miller, another junior college transfer, are fairly fast. All four can catch the ball. Marshall was the only freshman to letter last season. He played tight end in the spring, and could help out there again. Beckett lacks speed, but has the knack of getting in the open. This is another position where freshmen may be able to help. Besides Mally and Blake, possibilities include Bill Collins of Chicago and three Canadians, Doug Denike, Paul Bennett, and Phil Reynolds. Denike, from Toronto, is reputed to be the second fastest sprinter in Canada. He has a 9.4 hundred yard dash.

## Tight Ends

*DON MUSE	6-2	205 Jr.
CHARLIE DOUGLASS	6-4	205 So.
LES FRANK	6-3	225 Jr.

A late spring junior college recruit from San Diego, Frank will get a lot of scrutiny this fall. Film clips indicate he possesses both pass catching and blocking ability, and his size will help shore up one of the Tigers' weaker positions. Muse had an excellent spring and is certainly adequate. The strong, rawboned Douglass also was impressive, but lacks experience. Last year's starter, John Kelsey, has been moved to tackle, but may still play at his old position in situations calling for two tight ends.



Scott Anderson

## Centers

**SCOTT ANDERSON	6-4	235 Sr.
MIKE OWENS	6-3	225 So.
*KURT WEISENFELS	6-0	218 Jr.

Bigger nose guards on defense have brought about the need for bigger centers; thus, the switch of Anderson from guard. The preseason concern about this position has to do with inexperience, not ability. Anderson was named national lineman of the week by *Sports Illustrated* after his Notre Dame game. Owens had a most impressive spring ("he really hit people"), and will play some place this season. Anderson, a *Playboy* preseason all-American, has a history of knee problems, and this causes some concern.

### Offensive Guards

DON BUCK	6-2	230 Jr.
**MIKE LEVICK	6-3	218 Sr.
*STEVE SADICH	6-3	220 Jr.
**CHRIS KIRLEY	6-5	220 Sr.
KEN KELLS	6-0	220 So.

All the guards did well this spring, although Kells may not be ready to help in 1973.

Buck, a junior college transfer from San Diego, quickly established himself. Levick and Kirley both were sometime starters last season, and Sadich was a solid reserve. All in all, a strong position.

### Offensive Tackles

**JIM SCHNIETZ	6-3	242 Sr.
**KELLEY CURBOW	6-5	240 Sr.
**JOHN KELSEY	6-6	230 Sr.
*DON OWENS	6-5	230 Jr.
BOB CARR	6-4	240 So.

Seniors Schnietz, a Tiger co-captain, and Curbow give Missouri size and experience. Kelsey, moved from tight end, made tremendous strides this spring. If Owens' knee holds up, he will help. Carr has good potential, but has yet to prove himself. Another possibility is Don's younger brother, Mike Owens.

### Kickers

#### Punters

JIM GOBLE	6-2	190 So.
*HENRY MARSHALL	6-3	195 So.

#### Placekicker

**GREG HILL	5-10	185 Sr.
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Although Goble needs more consistency, he is capable of kicking in the 40-yard range. Hill last season converted on 19 of 22 points after touchdowns and 13 of 19 field goals. His 58 points led the Tigers in the scoring department.

### Defensive Ends

**STEVE SCHREIBER	6-3	215 Sr.
*DAVE JOHNSTON	6-2	220 Jr.
*BOB KEENEY	6-2	210 Jr.
BOB McROBERTS	6-0	205 So.
BLAINE HENNINGSEN	6-3	210 So.

Now, the ends will both rush and drop back, and Schreiber made the changeover to the new defense well this spring. Johnston had a good sophomore year, but still needs more consistency. Exceptionally quick, he has the tools to make the big play. Keeney is coming back after his second knee operation. McRoberts is a tough red-shirt,



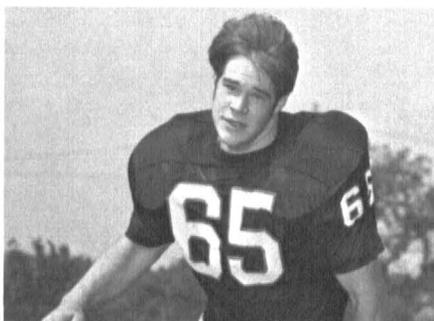
Frank Caldwell

while Henningsen, a high school quarterback, is a true sophomore. He impressed during spring drills.

### Defensive Tackles

*DENNIS VANARSDALL	6-1	220 Jr.
MARK JOHNSON	6-3	230 Jr.
*RAY MILLER	6-3	225 Jr.
**LARRY FROST	6-3	230 Sr.
LARRY McDEVITT	6-0	235 So.

Onofrio would like to have more size here, but the Mizzou tackles are quick. Vanarsdall, one of the team's standouts, started as a sophomore in 1972. Johnson was hurt much of last fall and just failed to letter as a linebacker. Miller, switched from defensive end, made the transition well and is slated to backup both tackles. Frost has been a part-time starter the last two years. McDevitt, a true sophomore, looks good, but is not quite ready.



Dennis Vanarsdall



Scott Pickens

### Middle Guards

*FRANK CALDWELL	6-1	225 Sr.
TOM COOPER	5-11	230 So.
HERRIS BUTLER	5-11	218 Sr.

Missouri's middle guards make their debut in an era when most players in that position are giants, in the 250-pound and up class. But Caldwell, who lettered at tackle last year, has made the adjustment well. The position has big-play potential, and Caldwell proved he could make the big play last fall. Cooper will play both tackle and middle guard. Butler, a wrestler who has not quite found himself in football, seems much more at home in this position. Tiger coaches tried to recruit a big junior college middle guard this spring, but failed. There is a promising freshman, however, Morris Townes, a 270-pounder St. Louisian, who

may see varsity action before the season is over.

### Linebackers

*SCOTT PICKENS	6-2	220 Jr.
*LYNN EVANS	5-11	200 Jr.
**BOB ORSI	5-11	200 Sr.
JOHN AUSTIN	6-2	195 So.
TOM HODGE	6-2	218 So.
MARK KIRKPATRICK	6-1	205 So.

Pickens, who should be one of the Big Eight's best, and Evans give the Tigers a strong brace of linebackers. Orsi is a two-year defensive specialist who provides needed depth. The others, true sophomores, are inexperienced. Austin is a brother of Dave Austin, a Missouri linebacker of a couple of seasons ago, but John is bigger and faster than his older brother.

### Secondary

#### Tiger backs

*STEVE YOUNT	6-0	185 Jr.
**KEN GREGORY	6-0	185 Sr.

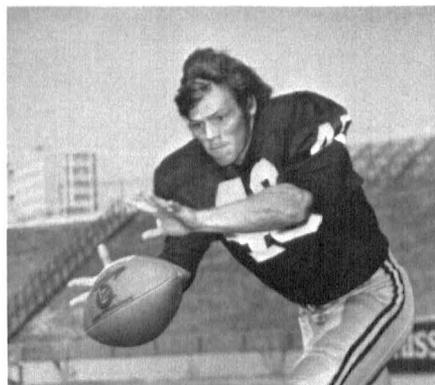
#### Cornerbacks

**JOHN MOSELEY	5-9	160 Sr.
*BRAD BROWN	6-1	185 Jr.
CHUCK BANTA	6-0	185 So.

#### Safeties

*TONY GILLICK	5-11	175 Jr.
JERRY WILLIAMS	6-0	180 So.

The Tigers have abandoned man-to-man coverage—which required great athletes—i.e., the Roger Wehrlis, the Johnny Rolands—in favor of the zone, which only requires good athletes. Most established is Co-Captain John Moseley, a walk-on whose heads-up and gutsy style of play has endeared him to coaches and fans alike. Gregory, a regular as a sophomore, returns after being incapacitated most of last season with a back ailment. Gillick, last year's No. 2 quarterback, looked exceptional in his new position during spring workouts. Brown may move to Tiger back (the traditional monster man in this defensive alignment), and Williams could easily end up a starter at one of the corners. Banta will swing to any of the positions as a back-up. The key to the secondary probably is Gillick. Safety is where you need your best athlete, and the safety is the guy who runs things in the secondary. Gillick, incidentally, will join Moseley as a punt returner.



John Moseley