



Assistant Coach Clay Cooper coordinates football recruiting effort.

# Ol' Mizzou Wants You



**I**T'S BARELY POSSIBLE that the winner of 1970's Missouri-Notre Dame football game now is being decided.

This isn't to say, of course, that a single football game 4½ years away rates special concern by the University, or even the Athletic Department. It's simply a way to point out that the freshmen gridders who gather at Columbia next fall will be the seniors of 1970. And for Coach Dan Devine and this staff the recruiting season is hard at hand. Promising student-athletes could be signed to the Big 8's letter of intent on Feb. 14. Signing date for the national letter is May 15.

Unlike universities in some conferences which have full-time recruiters on their staffs, Missouri's recruiting

is handled entirely by the coaches.

What type of boy are they looking for?

Assistant coach Clay Cooper, who co-ordinates the Tigers' recruiting effort, puts it this way:

"We recruit in the image of what we have."

What Cooper is saying is this: The Missouri student-athlete traditionally presents a picture of a youth who is fundamentally sound, "the kind other parents want their boys to play with." The Missouri boy also is likely to be a pretty fair football player.

There is much of the guessing game inherent in recruiting for football. First of all, two-platoons require 22 team players, more than any other sport. In basketball and baseball the recruiter can look at the box scores



St. Louis recruiting trip a year ago turned out highly successful for Coach Don Devine, standing at right. Of the 11 high school prospects with him, seven played on Tiger freshman team last fall. Seated are five members of the 1966 Sugar Bowl Champions, Gary Kombrink, Gary Lane, Jim Waller, Tom Lyny and All-American Johnny Roland.

of the high school star and get some idea of his potential. Not so in football.

"We can't always be sure," says Cooper. "For example there are many good small backs, and some linemen, who will grow, but no one can tell positively which ones. And if one does grow to Big 8 size, will he retain his speed and agility?"

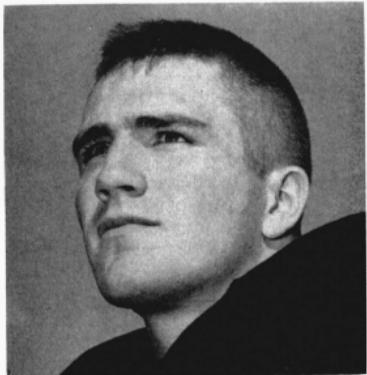
"Last year there was a small, fast back we weren't terribly interested in because of his size. He weighed only 155 pounds. But he was such a tremendous athlete—as we checked through the basketball season—that we offered a scholarship. In his case we made a wise decision, because now, a year later, he weighs 182."

And, how can the intangibles be measured? Traits

like dedication and desire? Missouri coaches have developed many average athletes into fine major-college football players. Some have even won all-conference honors. But it also took extreme desire on the part of the boy. And a coach can't always tell in interviewing a high school prospect who has it and who hasn't. Certainly, some prospects with exceptional ability haven't lived up to their promise.

Today's student-athlete must react positively to pressures. Missouri is not an easy school. Any student has to work and produce. And the tempo of major-college football is demanding as well.

Then there are the academic qualifications. Missouri's student-athletes must be good, if not great, students. The



Dave Gill was 1963 Red Blaik scholarship winner.



Academic All-Americans of '66, Bill Powell and Dan Schuppan.

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1.6 rule enacted by the National Collegiate Athletic Association is tougher than it seems. A student who can score well enough to make the predicted 1.6 (a C-) on the battery of tests actually will average 2.0 during his first year at the University. Missouri, however, has not found the 1.6 rule stifling. The University always has sought the good student. After all, it doesn't do an athletic program any good to take boys who later flunk out of school.

All right, this is the type of student-athlete Missouri wants. Where do you find the 45 or so you need each year who meet the qualifications, who can be awarded the NCAA scholarship of room, board, tuition and \$15 a month incidental expenses?

Here's what the coaches say: "The prospects are easy to find. We never really stop recruiting, and our contacts with high schools and coaches, as well as alumni working with us, keep the staff pretty well informed. We'll probably contact 300 prospects a year."

The effort is well organized. Under the overall direction of Devine, the staff responsibilities are divided as

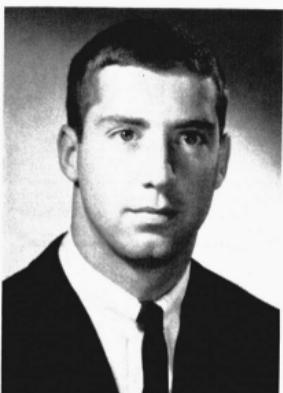
follows: St. Louis area, John Kadlec and Hank Kuhlmann; Kansas City, Keith Weber; suburban Kansas City and outstate Missouri, Harry Smith; Southeast and Southwest Missouri, Cooper; East St. Louis, Al Onofrio; Illinois, Bob Frala. And as mentioned, Cooper is the overall co-ordinator. There are, as you would expect, special assignments from time to time as prospects are recruited from outside these areas.

From the 300 or so contacts, the list is refined, first of all by grades, to some extent through game films furnished by the high schools involved, but more important through the coaches' own appraisals as to the prospect's character and physical capabilities and potential.

Whatever the method used for pruning, the staff will end up with about 80 student-athletes—10 apiece—who will be actively recruited. Some of the others will be urged to attend school as volunteer recruits to see whether or not they can qualify later. In contrast to some schools, Missouri does not award athletic scholarships on a trial basis. Every boy receiving a M.U.



Fred Brossart won 1960 Blaik scholarship.



End Tom Lynn achieved '65 NCAA scholarship.



Jim Whitaker was NCAA winner in 1966.

scholarship will have an opportunity to make a contribution to the squad, whether on the varsity or the scouting teams.

The recruiter's task is not to interest the prospect in attending Missouri. The University's reputation is such and the football program is well enough established that every boy is interested. The job is to sell him.

"Other schools have good programs, too," Cooper points out. "Any of our 80 prime candidates also will have been contacted by from 5 to 30 or more other schools."

More and more top-flight prospects must be sold on the academic excellence of a university. Missouri, with its 15 different divisions on the Columbia campus, is well-equipped in this phase of the selling job.

"Some 80 or 90 boys and their parents visit the campus each season," says Cooper. "During this time we tour the facilities, exposing them to the advantages at Missouri. But more significant are the conferences with the dean of the particular school in which the prospect is interested, as well as with one or two of the

professors. The faculty has been very good about helping us."

Also important are visits with members of the freshmen and varsity squads. They're often Mizzou's best salesmen. The Tigers' hallmark during the Devine era has been poise and pride.

"The fact that our boys who went into pro ball did so well this year—Johnny Roland, of course, made rookie of the year in the National Football League—isn't hurting either. And the fact that Bill Powell and Danny Schuppan were named to academic all-American teams this year also is a boost."

In the introduction of the University's recruiting brochure, Athletic Director Don Faurot succinctly sums up Missouri's recruiting approach:

"The University of Missouri is an institution of outstanding academic and athletic repute. It relies on students of exceptional ability and promise to maintain this distinguished role. We at the University are interested in you as a prospective student-athlete. We hope you are interested in us." □