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Red Raiders—big, fast, talented

By **MIKE BRUTON**
2nd of a series of
articles on SWC teams

Texas Tech lost a lot of talent from their football team, but they still have a surplus of speed and size and they're out to prove that Texas isn't the only team that knows how to win.

The Red Raiders had the best record in the Southwest Conference last season (11-1). They also have five starters returning on both offense and defense, but the big question is at the quarterback position. How do you replace Joe Barnes?

Coach Jim Carlen has a pretty good answer in Tommy Duniven. "He's the main key, there's no doubt about that," Carlen said when asked if his team would be as successful as it was in 1973. "What we did last season was due greatly to the year Barnes had. Joe was flat sensational. What we do this fall will depend to a great extent on how well Duniven does."

As a freshman in 1972, Duniven attracted a lot of attention as he led a supposedly mediocre Tech freshman team to a 5-0 record, including victories over Oklahoma and Houston. However, with Barnes and Jimmy Carmichael both playing outstanding that spring, Duniven was put on the red-shirt list. Now he's back with the starting job and he knows how to handle it.

Any other problems the Raiders may have can be remedied, because they are long on talent despite graduation losses. When you start talking about all-conference candidates it's hard to leave out players like flanker Lawrence Williams, tackle Tommy Lusk and tailback Larry Issac on offense; and end Tommy Cones, nose guard David Knaus, tackle Ecomet Burley, linebacker Charlie Beery and safety Curtis Jordan on defense.

Tech graduated the entire strong side of their offensive wall, but it didn't dampen the spirit of coaches Jack Fligg and John Conley. They compare Lusk to Jerry Sisemore. "We haven't had one just like him," said Conley. "Tommy is big, and he's strong and he's football smart."

"I believe we can have a good line of scrimmage before the season is over," adds Fligg. "And, tackle to tackle, we'll be as good as last year. These kids are a lot bigger than the ones we had a year ago. Put Willie

Thomas at 247 right beside Lusk's 255, and you've got some size. But where we'll be off is at tight end. We sure as heck don't have another Tillman."

All-American Andre Tillman will indeed be hard to replace, but with letterman Pat Felix and Sylvester Brown, the SWC's leading freshman receiver last year, the tight end position is well covered.

The Raiders seem to always have an abundance of good running backs and this year's crop is no exception with Larry Issac, leading scorer for the Raiders in 1973, at tailback and a very capable John Garner at fullback.

In the backup roles are Marc Pace, an extremely tough runner, and fleet-footed Jimmy Williams at tailback. Fullback Cliff Hoskins, who was sidelined in 1973 with a leg injury, has regained the form that he had the first time he touched the ball in varsity competition when he went 79 yards for a touchdown against Utah.

On defense, what else can you say but Ecomet Burley. Burley, a prime All-American candidate, is extremely aggressive and probably the quickest defensive tackle in the conference. Joining Burley on the

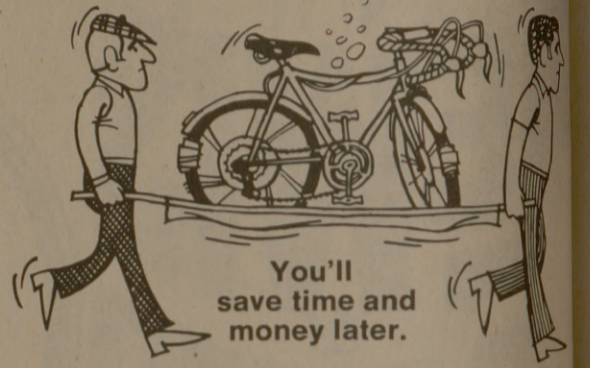
line are Knaus and Cones, who are fine players in their own right.

Beery, 6-0 and 206, who Carlen calls "the best linebacker we've had here," will be the leader of Tech's linebacking crew. Converted nose guard Tom Dyer and Randy Lancaster will hold the other spots.

The Red Raider secondary, hardest hit by graduation losses, will be headed by speedy and hostile Curtis Jordan at free safety. Randy Olson returns at one corner, while both Selo Ramirez and Gary Bartel have the potential to be exceptional at cornerback. Tony Green, who was red-shirted last season, will be at strong safety.

The Red Raiders were very impressive in 1973 both offensively and defensively, scoring 38 touchdowns and giving up only 19. If Duniven is for real and Tech is able to overcome "the graduation blues" they just might find themselves on top of things because they know how to win.

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