

ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

ATHLETICS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 20, 2006
Contact: Ben Greenberg, SID (479) 968-0645

WONDER BOYS FOOTBALL SET TO CONDUCT ITS ANNUAL GREEN AND GOLD SPRING GAME SATURDAY

RUSSELLVILLE, Arkansas – Arkansas Tech Football is set to conduct its annual Green and Gold Spring Game on Saturday morning at Buerkle Field on the Tech campus.

In an unusual twist this spring, the Green and Gold Game, which is normally held at night, will kickoff at 9:30 a.m. due to lack of power at Buerkle Field because of the ongoing renovation of the stadium as part of Tech's four-million dollar 'Return to Glory' Capital campaign. Following the Green and Gold game, the Tech football staff will host a picnic for all the Wonder Boy football players and their families.

"We're excited for Saturday's Green and Gold game, but this year it will a different atmosphere due to us moving the game to the morning," Tech Head Football Coach and Athletic Director **Steve Mullins** said. "In the past, we've had tremendous crowds for our Green and Gold game and I hope the same holds true this year."

Saturday's Green and Gold game will feature the No. 1s (green jerseys) going up against the rest of the squad (white jerseys) in a four-quarter game. Mullins said that the teams will not play 15 minute quarters, but was unsure whether they would play 10 or 12 minute quarters. In addition, 8-10 players would switch from the second team to the first team after halftime.

This season's spring practices have been hindered due to injuries to Tech's top two quarterbacks, redshirt sophomore **Justin Ray** (Benton, Ark.) and sophomore transfer **Cole Barthel** (Decatur, Ala.). Ray has yet to take part in most of the spring drills due to an ankle injury suffered playing intramural basketball, while Barthel injured his knee in the team's third practice of the spring.

"It's been tough spring for us to be able to do a lot offensively due to the injuries we've suffered at quarterback," Mullins said. "You can only do so much without a quarterback."

Fans who attend the Green and Gold game will get to witness Tech's new offensive and defensive schemes that the Wonder Boys will run during the upcoming season.

On offense, Tech will look to take advantage of the athletic ability of its quarterbacks by running a spread-like offense that features a lot of

misdirection plays and run-pass options, while on defense, Tech has switched to a 3-4 from last season's 4-3-5 scheme.

Mullins said that due to the lack of electricity, their will be no scoreboard or 25-second clocks in operation.

"I'm not concerned about a 25-second clock on Saturday due to the pace of our offense," Mullins said.

With the absence of Ray and Barthel at quarterback, redshirt freshmen **C.J. Hunter** (West Helena, Ark.) and **Bubba Noakes** (Ola, Ark.), who came to Tech as receivers, have been forced to play quarterback during spring drills.

"C.J. and Bubba have done a good job, considering they are both wide receivers," said Mullins, who is entering his 10th season at the helm of the Wonder Boys this coming fall.

Hunter will run the snaps for the Green team, while Noakes and redshirt sophomore **Gabe Albeik** (Bryant, Ark.) will play quarterback for the White team.

Mullins said that this spring has been an opportunity to players to step up and shine with so many starting spots open in the fall. Tech returns only three starters on offense and six starters on defense from last season's 7-3 team that finished 6-3 in the Gulf South Conference.

Following Saturday's Green and Gold game, Tech will have one more practice, which will be non-pad on Monday, before completing spring football drills with the Senior Bowl on Tuesday at 6 p.m.

"I expect the Senior Bowl will be more competitive as the talent will be more evenly disbursed," Mullins said.

Other Tech Football News –

* - On Friday, Tech will hold its annual Link-It-Up Golf Outing at Chamberlyne Golf Club in Danville, Ark. Tech assistant football coach **Gregg Ricono** said that the numbers for the golf outing are up from last year and he expects 21 foursomes to play in the event. Ricono said that the registration and lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. at Chamberlyne, while golf will have a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m.

-- Tech Athletics --