



Gilbert High's
1927 Basketball
Team

The Team



Front Row: Donald Sheldon, manager; John Freestone, sub forward; Louis Crandall, captain and guard; Lowell Callahan, sub guard; Owen W. Allen, coach

Second Row: Mose Copper, forward; Merrill Brookins, guard; Bill Ashby, sub guard and center

Third Row: Honer Allen, center; Thomas Scott, forward

In 1927 the Gilbert High boy's basketball team was invited to represent the Salt River Valley in the National Tournament which was held March 29- April 2, 1927, in Chicago. The team lost the state championship to Safford, but they were still invited to the tournament.



THE TIGER



BASKETBALL NUMBER

Vol. 1

GILBERT, ARIZONA, MONDAY, MARCH 21, 1927

No. 3

TIGERS TO NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

GILBERT FIVE TO PLAY FOR U. S. CROWN

Gilbert High School will send its basketball team to Chicago to represent the Salt River Valley in the National Tournament which will be held from March 25 to April 2. The whole state is looking Gilbert in holding its state title for the first time.

The boys realize that they have a great chance to win the U. S. title. They have the reputation of being a fast, hard and clean style of basketball, and are always glad again whether they win or lose.

The record of the Gilbert Tigers shows that Gilbert has been a basketball power for the last several years. But at the same time, they have a record of being one of the championship teams. Gilbert has never won the state title. It has finished in runner-up the first four times and the second place the last two times. Gilbert was here to watch out of the state championship this year when Phoenix played a last minute bid to win a state title. After having trailed behind Gilbert throughout the entire game, they won the state championship by the virtue of being faster in running in possession and shooting.

Since then Thomas Scott, Phoenix and Phoenix Phoenix, who are all legends, have played basketball for years. They were in the state title. Louis Crandall, the coach of Phoenix, is a former and has coached the Gilbert teams since the year 1924. He is a former basketball player and has coached at all schools in Gilbert. He has coached the Gilbert teams since they were in the state title. Louis Crandall, who is the coach of Phoenix, has coached the Gilbert teams since they were in the state title.

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The picture shows, standing from left to right: Front row—Donald Shoben, manager; John Proctor, sub-forward; Louis Crandall, captain and coach; Lovell (Laddie), sub guard; Owen W. Allen, coach. Second row—Bennie (Dopey) Ferrant, Merrill (Laddie), guard; Bill Acosta, sub guard and center; Thelma (Tommy) Allen, center; Francis (Dopey) Ferrant.

Basketball Players Guests at Breakfast

The lunch the final game of the state tournament, vs. the Gilbert team, was greatly enjoyed, when he returned to the hotel to find his room shared after the game by Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Smallwood, of Phoenix, as breakfast the team to arrive at one of the national clubs of Phoenix.

The next morning all were surprised to see a letter from the school which stated that they were to be the guests of the school from Gilbert who were to be the guests of the school. It is all very interesting and very exciting. It is all very interesting and very exciting. It is all very interesting and very exciting.

Gilbert Wins From Mesa Independents


The first game of the three game series between the Gilbert High School Tigers, champions of the Salt River Valley, and the Mesa Junior Chamber of Commerce, basketball champions of Arizona, were won by the Gilbert team. The purpose of these games was to determine which team is to be the state champion in Phoenix. It was to give the name of the valley in the national inter-school tournament.

The game was very well played. The school was very well played. The school was very well played. The school was very well played. The school was very well played.

GILBERT TIGERS WIN IN VALLEY CAGE TOURNEY

Five inspired basketball players representing the Gilbert High School went into the heart of the Valley basketball championship held on the night of Feb. 12, and returned victorious, outside and returned the Phoenix Junior High School team. Donald (Dopey) Ferrant, captain of the Gilbert team, represented the Gilbert team. He was very well played. He was very well played. He was very well played.

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The Gilbert Chamber of Commerce helped raise the money for the boys to attend the tournament along with other fundraisers such as a series of three basketball games between the Gilbert Tigers and Mesa Independents.

Douglas Daily
Dispatch, 1927

Sunday Evening
**Three-Game Basketball
Series Between Mesa
And Gilbert Arranged**

PHOENIX, March 2 (P)—A three-game basketball series between Gilbert high school, valley scholastic champions, and the Mesa Jaycees, independent champions of Arizona, to raise funds to send the Gilbert cagers to Chicago for the national scholastic tournament, March 22, was announced today by Owen Allen, Gilbert coach.

The first game will be played at Gilbert Friday night, the second at Phoenix next week, and the final at Mesa two weeks hence. All proceeds will go towards defraying the Gilbert team's expense, Coach Allen stated.

Members of the Gilbert squad who will make the trip were announced today. They are H. Allen, G. Scott, G. Friestone, L. Callahan, forwards; H. Allen, center, and M. Brookins, B. Ashby and B. Sparks, guards.

This article from the March 21, 1927, TIGER newspaper shows the ongoing support for the boys basketball team.

"On to Chicago"

"On to Chicago" has caused much excitement and work by many, especially by the Girl Reserves. During the ball game on March 4, the girls sold candy, making \$5. The girls, through the aid of the Home Economics Department, made cakes which brought in clear \$20.25.

Every girl will remember the last meeting on February 18. The program was conducted by Corinne Shultz with the assistance of Wanda Clubb, Vera Sparks, Marian Silverthorne and Dorothy Bracy. An interesting discussion on "Everyday Manners" followed by a short talk on manners. Refreshments were served by officers of the club.

Regardless of the fact that the preparations for the Mother and Daughter banquet have been stopped on account of school activities, we intend soon to have the banquet.

—
The Saburo



Coach Louis John Donald R. Merrill Rose Lowell Inn Guve Bill
Allen Crandall Freestone Sheldon Brooks Cooper Callahan Scott Allen Ashby
Gilbert High School Tigers basketball team. Competed in the National High School Interscholastic
Tournament held at the University of Chicago March 29 through April 2. Finished in 7th place.

The Gilbert team is in the lower left corner, all wearing large cowboy hats. The Phoenix Chamber of Commerce gave the team the cowboy hats to make sure Arizona would receive attention. They finished 7th place in the tournament.

The team stayed in the Windermere East Hotel in Chicago instead of staying in one of the fraternity house at the University of Chicago, where the tournament was being played.



THE GAMES

- In Gilbert's first game of the tournament the team lost to Bristol, Conn 16-19. Even though they lost they were entered into consolation play.
- In their second game Gilbert defeated South High of Minneapolis 27-17. Then they went on to beat Durham, N.C 36-19 and Duval High School of Jacksonville, Fla. 27-25.
- In the semifinals Gilbert lost to Northeast High School of Kansas City, Kan. 24-25 in a game that came down to the final whistle.
- Gilbert finished the tournament in seventh place and received awards after the final game. A medal and a handshake from sports personality Amos [Alonzo Stagg](#). They were also awarded trophies and a basketball used in the games.

THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 1927.

CHICAGO TEAMS WIN IN PREP

The Tribune's Telephone Number Is
Superior 0100

1927

Tourney Scores

Englewood, Chicago, 20; DePaul, Wis., 20.
Wheaton College, 10; Parkland, Tex., 20.
Illinois, 10; 20; Michigan, 10; 20.
Yale, 10; 20; Stanford, 10; 20.
Harvard, 10; 20; Cornell, 10; 20.
Northwestern, 10; 20; Princeton, 10; 20.
Ohio State, 10; 20; Indiana, 10; 20.
Wisconsin, 10; 20; Iowa, 10; 20.
Illinois, 10; 20; Michigan, 10; 20.
Yale, 10; 20; Stanford, 10; 20.
Harvard, 10; 20; Cornell, 10; 20.
Northwestern, 10; 20; Princeton, 10; 20.
Ohio State, 10; 20; Indiana, 10; 20.
Wisconsin, 10; 20; Iowa, 10; 20.

Englewood was great in both the first and second halves of the game, and it is the only team to have won both halves of a game in this tournament. (Chicago) scored in the first 10 minutes of play, and in the next 10 minutes of play they scored 14 to 10. (Chicago) scored in the first 10 minutes of play, and in the next 10 minutes of play they scored 14 to 10. (Chicago) scored in the first 10 minutes of play, and in the next 10 minutes of play they scored 14 to 10.

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CHICAGO	ENGLEWOOD
1st Half	1st Half
2nd Half	2nd Half
Total	Total

CAGE MEET

CHEYENNE LOSES TO ENGLEWOOD; MORTON VICTOR

Suburban Five Nips Fairmont, W. Va.

Suburban Five Nips Fairmont, W. Va.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1927.

MORTON WINS; ENTERS SEMI

The Tribune's Telephone Number Is
Superior 0100

1927

FINALS

SUBURBAN LADS MARCH THROUGH GEORGIA, 27-26

Meet Florence, Miss., This Afternoon.

Tourney Scores

CHICAGO:
Wheaton College, 10; Parkland, Tex., 20.
Illinois, 10; 20; Michigan, 10; 20.
Yale, 10; 20; Stanford, 10; 20.
Harvard, 10; 20; Cornell, 10; 20.
Northwestern, 10; 20; Princeton, 10; 20.
Ohio State, 10; 20; Indiana, 10; 20.
Wisconsin, 10; 20; Iowa, 10; 20.

Tourney Scores

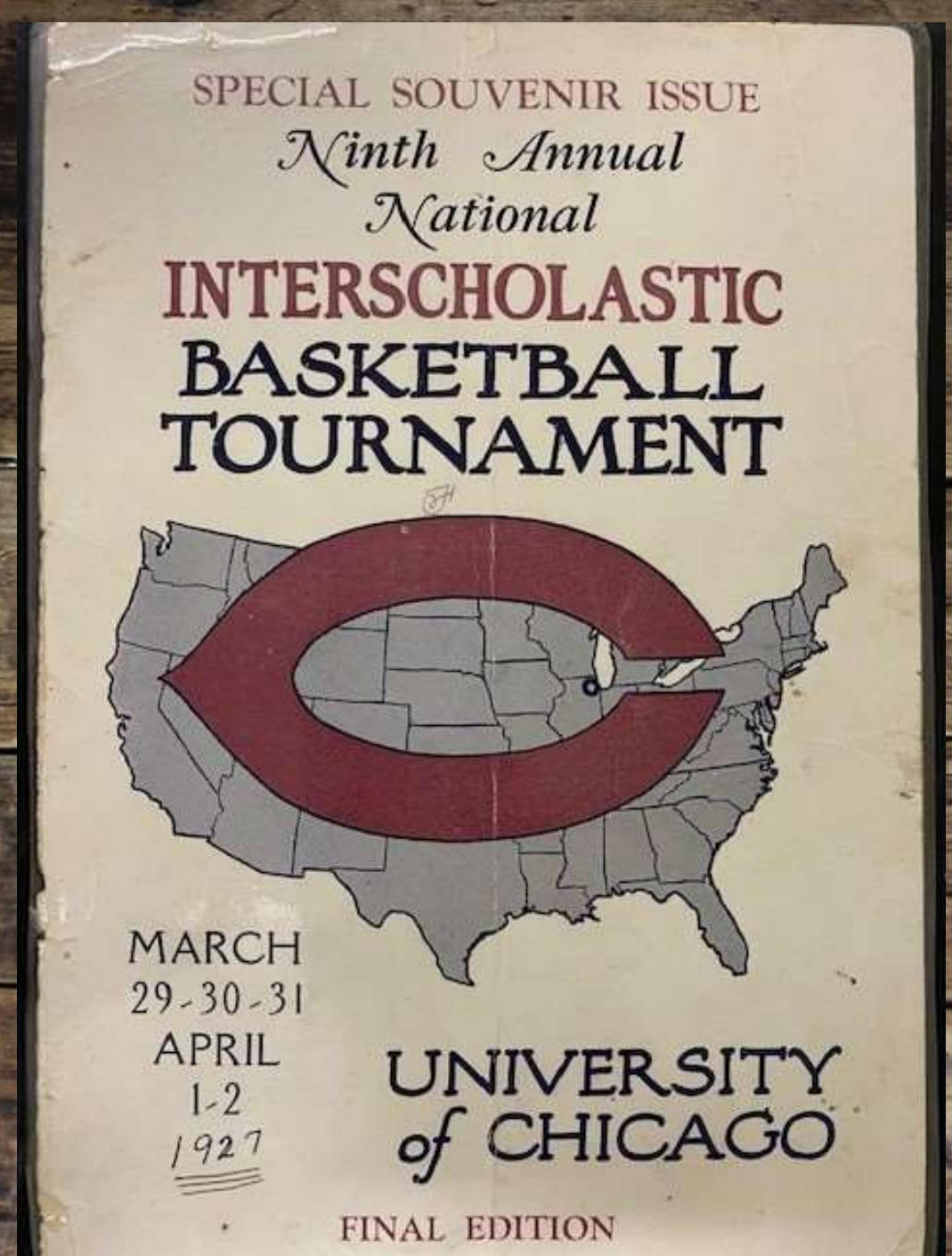
CHICAGO:
Wheaton College, 10; Parkland, Tex., 20.
Illinois, 10; 20; Michigan, 10; 20.
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Harvard, 10; 20; Cornell, 10; 20.
Northwestern, 10; 20; Princeton, 10; 20.
Ohio State, 10; 20; Indiana, 10; 20.
Wisconsin, 10; 20; Iowa, 10; 20.

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Ohio State, 10; 20; Indiana, 10; 20.
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Wisconsin, 10; 20; Iowa, 10; 20.

Souvenir program
from the tournament





Medal won by the
Gilbert Team

Friday, May 2, 1986

Lads hoop it up in Chicago during 1927 national tourney

While "Chicago" became the rallying cry as boosters raised money to send Gilbert High School's basketball team to the Windy City for the 1927 National Basketball Tournament.

"Dances, carnivals, exhibition games between the team and a Mesa Junior of Chamber of Commerce team, auctions and every conceivable money-raising event were staged," said John Freestone, now 76 and one of the team's members. "Many citizens made sizable contributions."

The Phoenix Chamber of Commerce wanted to make sure Arizona would receive attention, so team members and coaches were presented with huge cowboy hats with a gold band bearing the inscription, "Gilbert, Arizona," in black letters. They also were given copies of a state song, "Arizona."

And there were a couple of into the then-fashionable Windermere East Hotel.

"It was a push place, and just staying there was an experience a country boy never forgets," Freestone said.

"One day, a very gracious lady put on the elevator with us. She asked about where we were from and what we were doing in Chicago. After we reached the lobby and she stepped off the elevator, the operator told us she was Edna Forber, the noted novelist."

Play in the national tournament at the University of Chicago field house began on Monday and continued through the week, with the final games on Saturday night.

Every time Gilbert took the floor, the team faced a state champion.

In the first game, Gilbert, hampered by stage fright, lost to the Bristol, Conn., team, 16-19.

(Meanwhile, Safford, entered in the tournament as Arizona's 1927 state champion, defeated Franklin, N.H., 29-20, then lost to London, Ky., 29-29, and returned home.)

Gilbert stayed for the consolation play, defeating South High of



Tom Freestone

stipulations. The players and coaches had to step out of their railroad car and sing the song at stops along the way, and they had to return the hats to the chamber upon their return.

"We sang the song in several states," Freestone said. "And what we lacked in harmony, we made up in volume. Some of them couldn't

Minneapolis, 27-17; Durham, N.C., 36-19; and Duval High School of Jacksonville, Fla., 27-25.

The two points scored by Freestone in this game spelled the difference.

Then, in the semifinals of the consolation bracket, Gilbert lost to Northeast High School of Kansas City, Kan., 34-25.

"The ball was in the air at the final whistle," Freestone said. "It came down in the Kansas City basket, and they beat us by one point."

Overall, Gilbert had finished in seventh place and was among eight teams to receive awards after the final game.

"Each of us received a medal and a handshake from that great coach and sports personality, Ames Alonzo Stagg," Freestone said. "The basketballs used in the games won by the team, as well as other trophies, are still on display at Gilbert High School."

All except all the hats, that is. One boy sold his to a fan. The others were returned to the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce.

Scott, all-state forward three



Ken Arline

carry a tune in a bucket with a lid on it."

But there was no question about the basketball ability of Tom Scott, Gove Allen, Melvin "Mose" Cooper, Merrill Brookins, Bill Ashby and Freestone, all seniors, and Lowell Callahan, a freshman.

Their coach was Owen Allen. His assistant was Donald Sheldon.

Bob Thomas, who had taken a Mesa Union High School team to Chicago a year earlier, suggested to Coach Allen that it would be best for the players to stay in a hotel rather than in one of the fraternity houses.

So the Tigers booked themselves

See • Arline, SE-2 years and high-point man in the 1927 Valley tournament, state tournament and national tournament, was described by Freestone as "the greatest high school player up to that time."

Scott received a basketball scholarship to the University of Southern California. He stayed one year, then returned home and became a farmer. He is deceased.

Gove Allen played basketball at Northern Arizona Teachers College (now Northern Arizona University.)

While an assistant coach at the University of Chicago, he was in Flagstaff for a year. He was outcoached by "Navy" at a game, felled Kansas Coach Ed Allen described Gove Allen as the best center he had ever seen. Gove who became an educator, is now deceased.

Cooper, who managed a lumber company, Crandall, who became a farmer, and Brookins and Ashby are deceased. Callahan lives in California.

Freestone taught school in Nutrioso, Duncan and Florence, farmed and was state director of teacher certification for 14 years. He is now retired.

1986 article on the 1927 Gilbert High team, Tom Freestone, one of the members of the 1927 team, giving insight to what it was like being on the team and going to Chicago for the tournament.

Quick Basketball History Facts

-The game of basketball was invented in 1891 in Springfield, Massachusetts by a Canadian physical education instructor James Naismith

-The first games were played with peach baskets and a soccer style ball, and each team had 9 players. The first game was played on December 21, 1891

-In 1906 metal hoops, nets and backboards were introduced. In 1894 the soccer ball was replaced by a ball Naismith contracted Spalding to make.

-The first professional league was founded in 1898. Six teams took part in the National Basketball League, and the first champions were the Trenton Nationals

-Originally, basketball courts were built with chicken wire lining. This was to prevent falling into the stands

-The Basketball Association of America (BAA) was founded on June 6, 1946, in New York City.[29] The league adopted the name National Basketball Association (NBA) in 1949 after merging with the rival National Basketball League (NBL)



The first purpose-built basketballs were made from panels of leather stitched together with a rubber bladder inside. A cloth lining was added to the leather for support and uniformity.

Spalding was the first company to produce a basketball for official use. It has been the NBA's official game ball supplier since 1983

