Mulerider Spirit

Southern Arkansas University
Auburn Smith

- Football Coach for 23 years; Athletic Director and Financial Aid Director for 10 years
- Southern State College, 1947-75; Southern Arkansas University 1976-1979; SAU Board of Trustees, 1989-92
- B.A., Hendrix College; M.A., George Peabody College, Vanderbilt University
Auburn Smith

Smith was always known as Coach “Auburn,” because the head coach under whom he first served was named Elmer Smith. Coach Auburn headed the program from 1954 to 1969. Almost too nice to be a football coach, he sometimes gave scholarships to not-very-good second string players to help them attend college, not play football.
Coach Auburn became half-time director of athletics and half-time financial aid director in 1970. When all other resources were exhausted, he was known to give his own money to prevent a deserving student from dropping out of school. His gifts were always made anonymously.
Dr. Larry McNeal’s Tribute to Smith

“Auburn Smith was the epitome of a gentleman. I remember the first talk he ever gave us. He told us folks you need to get your priorities straight. He said number one comes your religion, number two your family, number three is your education, and number four is football. He not only said that, that was the way he operated.”
Dr. Larry McNeal played football at SSC from 1959-62 and graduated with a B. S. E. He earned an M. Ed. at Auburn University and a Ed. D. at North Texas State University. He taught at SSC from 1965 to 2000.