

Jamie Wilson was named all-state tournament at the state basketball tournament in Austin in 1938 when there was no statewide "all-state" team-- he thus made the only all-state team that was chosen that year. He was chosen one of the five best players on the top eight teams in the state which made "the final eight" at the state tournament in an era when there was only one state championship decided for all of the 1,500 teams in the state. He later played basketball and football at Texas A&M.

Jamie O. Wilson was born on Aug. 18, 1920, in Belton TX to James David & Rosa Lee Wilson. He was raised in Belton with seven siblings: Reginald, Homer, Arthur, Leon, Vincent, Doris & Edna. He grew up in Belton and graduated from Belton H.S. in 1938.

Wilson, a 6'2" forward, scored 16 of Belton's 24 points in the state tournament loss to Dallas Woodrow Wilson and made the all-tournament team along with two players from Woodrow Wilson. Wilson had earlier won "all tournament" honors in the Central Texas Invitational and the District and Regional tournaments. He was Belton's leading scorer for three years on teams that went to the regional tournament each year. He was a three-sport star for the Tigers as he won the District high jump championship with a leap of 6'2" in 1937 and was an outstanding end on Belton's football teams of 1935-38 (the 8-1 team of 1935 & the 9-1 team of 1937 were District champions and were beaten in Bi-District. He and teammates Charles Miller and Ray Mulhollan played in the "Oil Bowl," an all-star game between East and West stars from Texas Class B teams played in Wichita Falls on Sept. 4, 1939. Wilson was recruited by Arkansas, LSU and A&M for football and played football (end) and basketball at Texas A&M for two years (1939-41) before being drafted by the U.S. Army at the beginning of World War II.

Belton began the 1937-38 basketball season with no high expectations but surprised the experts by winning the 14-team First Annual Central Texas Invitational Tournament in Temple. Belton played the regular season as part of the newly formed Central Texas League that included Temple, Georgetown, Rosebud and Cameron and finished second in the league (to Temple) but league play "had no bearing on the state race." Belton's four losses during the year--to Temple, Waco and Rosebud (twice)---came early in the season before the team "hit its stride." In 1938 at the end of the regular season all schools participated in a county (or city) tournament, then in one of 32 "district" tournaments, and a "regional" (4 district winners) with the winner making the "final eight" in the state tournament in Austin. The Tigers beat Cyclone 36-4, the "county rural champion," in the Bell County tournament and, then in the District 23 tournament (8 county champions plus Temple H.S. and Austin H.S) at Georgetown, defeated Austin H.S. (the 3rd victory over Austin in 1938), Lampasas 34-25, and Georgetown 43-34. In the Regional Meet in San Marcos, Belton beat Shiner 28-16 in the first round and upset powerful Thomas Jefferson H.S. of San Antonio, 31-26, in the final to earn a berth in the state tournament and achieve a "Hoosiers" (the movie) type feat by reaching the "final eight" of 1,500 teams.

The 1938 state tournament field included Dallas Woodrow Wilson, Houston John Reagan, El Paso Bowie, Kingsville, Abilene, Carey, Bailey, and Belton (thus three small schools made the “final eight”). Belton was beaten 43-24 in the first round by 30-0 Dallas Woodrow Wilson which went on to defeat Houston Reagan 29-28 in the semifinals and Abilene H.S. 41-27 in the final to win the state championship.

The 1938 Tiger squad, coached by Bob Safley, was 30-4 entering the state tournament and was comprised of Jamie Wilson (38), Ray Stringer (33), Doyle McQueen (32), Joe Furnace (30), and Nick Furnace (36). The team was known for its tenacious defense and for the rebounding and scoring of Wilson who averaged around 15 points a game though the team seldom scored 40 points (he scored 16 of Belton’s 24 points in the state tournament game against Woodrow Wilson). The team was not “deep” and the starting five played almost all of every game.

Jamie served 4 years in the Marines in World War II and was involved in numerous marine landings as the Marines “island hopped” across the Pacific. After the war Wilson returned to Belton and operated Wilson Brothers’ Grocery until 1960 when he moved to Sanger CA after his first wife, Vi, (the former Violet Anderson of Belton) died so that his grandmother could help raise his four boys—James Jr, Bruce, Mark & Scott. Jamie worked for Safeway in Fresno for 23 years until his retirement in 1983. He met his second wife, Corrine, in Fresno and the couple added two more children, Pamela and Keith, to the family. In 2009, Jamie Wilson, 89, remained in Sanger CA. His descendants include seven children, 15 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren.