

The Forgotten Champions

Emblazoned on the water tank in Old Town Coppell are the names and dates of state championships won by Coppell High School. Conspicuously absent, however, is mention of the school's first championship.

In 1976, Coppell competed in the prestigious UIL One Act Play competition. The play was Neil Simon's "Plaza Suite," directed by Coppell graduate Wheelice Wilson Jr. The starring roles were performed by Janis Wilson and Michael Jackson (though not Michael Jackson of musical fame). The play was awarded first place and Jackson received the competition's top acting honors.

For good measure, Wilson and the drama department repeated the feat in 1977. The school's production of Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple" took first place and Wilson's future brother-in-law Mike Arthur was awarded the Samuel French Award as best actor. In addition, Coppell's Todd Freeman and Yancey Arthur were named to the All Star cast. Susan Corbin and Lisa Jackson received Honorable Mentions.

In successive years, Wilson and his theater students had set the bar for every Coppell team that would follow.

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