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MARK MAYNARD: Cole's Tomcat legacy secure 12/27/08

By MARK MAYNARD / Managing Editor

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— When Harold Cole left Ashland back in 1972, he wasn't sure if he'd ever return. It wasn't that Cole didn't like Ashland because he did. A lot. But after 16 seasons of coaching high school basketball — including seven at Ashland — he took his career in another direction as a state employee in Christian County. That's why Cole admits to being both humbled and surprised when he was asked to come back to Ashland as a Distinguished Tomcat honoree.

"You never know if you're remembered or not," he said. "I'll see all the people I thought I'd never see again."

Cole, 77, coached the Tomcats during the golden era of the 1960s. He won four 16th Region titles from 1965 to 1972 and went 4-4 in Sweet Sixteen games. Ashland reached the state semifinals in 1969 before dropping a heartbreaking 82-80 game to Ohio County.

"I think of that game every time I think about basketball," Cole said. "We had a nice lead. In those days, we ran the fastbreak, the old Marshall fastbreak. My college coach was a graduate of Marshall who played under Cam Henderson. It's the same break that Bob Wright used. We pressed and ran. Back in those days, they let you run under a guy after he went into the air."

But in the State Tournament, Ashland guards Johnny Mullins and Fred Leibee got in foul trouble because of charges.

"They fouled two guards out and we had to move (Ray) Kleykamp from forward to guard. That made us weaker inside."

Cole said the Tomcats probably couldn't have beaten Louisville Central in the finals, but he would have liked the chance.

"I thought we had a team that could compete better with Louisville Central than Ohio County," he said. Cole, who followed Wright as Ashland's coach in the 1964-65 season, had a 171-46 record in seven seasons, winning 79 percent of his games. That ranks third behind Wright (85 percent in six seasons) and Paul Jenkins (90 percent in three seasons).

His last Tomcat team in 1972 was ranked No. 1 in the state but lost to Russell 80-75 in the regional championship game in Morehead.

"We would have had a chance that year of going far in the state tournament, maybe even winning the state tournament," Cole said. "But we didn't get that far. That's the way it works."

Cole remembers the battles with Marvin Meredith at Russell and Jack Fultz at Olive Hill.

"Jack's team was one of the tough teams to get over," he said. "He was a tough competitor. He'd slow it down on you. He knew we'd like to run. If you let Jack stay in the game, he's got as good a chance as you had of winning."

"Russell had good teams back then, too. That was a great rival game. Even before the B-team game the house would be packed. Marvin had some good players at Russell. The year they beat me, they shot well. It was one of those games."

But it was during his last season that Cole said he enjoyed his "coaching peak."

After winning the Ashland Invitational Tournament, the Tomcats were invited to the Fayette County Invitational at Henry Clay and defeated Bryan Station (coached by Bob Barlow), Henry Clay (coached by Al Prewitt) and Lafayette (coached by Jock Sutherland) on successive nights.

"That's what I think of as my most satisfying moment as a coach," he said. "That week was a big peak week

for me. I'll never forget that."

Cole's honor at the AIT will be at halftime of tonight's game between Ashland and Beechwood. There will be a reception following the Ashland game for former players and friends at the school.

"I never really thought this kind of thing would happen," Cole said. "I feel honored to be identified with the Tomcat tradition. I thought about that every game, every practice, trying to uphold the great tradition that Ashland basketball had.

"Sometimes players want to ride on that tradition that somebody else established. We tried to keep that from happening. We told them to establish their own identity and not piggyback on what somebody else did. Do your own. Get your own recognition. I think we did that."

Cole, who lives in Somerset, said he has no regrets about his high school coaching career at Knox Central and Ashland. He took Knox Central to the State Tournament the year before the Tomcats hired him.

Cole's assistant coaches from 1969 to 1972 were Steve Gilmore and Randy Williams.

"They both were terrific, supportive coaches," Cole said. "They assisted me and ran the junior varsity program. We had an understanding. They would tell me what they thought and I wanted to know what they were thinking. But if I don't go with you here, you support whatever decision I make. They did that, too."

Gilmore, the current superintendent of schools and former Ashland mayor, would follow Cole as Ashland's head basketball coach from 1972 to 1975.

MARK MAYNARD can be reached at mmaynard@dailyindependent.com or (606) 326-2648.

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MARK MAYNARD: Region history worth telling 030509

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— Most of you know, diving into area sports history is a passion of mine.

The stories of our sports legends grow with each passing day.

We're watching a bit of history this season with Elliott County's amazing boys basketball team. Years from now, somebody (maybe me?) will be re-telling the story of the Lions' magical run in the 16th Region. If there's an upset this weekend, we'll be writing about that for years to come, too.

So either way, history will be made.

If Elliott County somehow becomes state champions — and that's not something that falls into the category of the Impossible Dream — then there will probably be books written and movies produced about the boys from Sandy Hook. The Lions could become Kentucky's version of "Hoosiers."

But that's getting ahead of ourselves.

For now, step back into the Wayback Machine with me on a 50-year journey, in 10-year segments, about some other memorable moments in 16th Region history.

1959

It was the Year of the Comets.

Olive Hill High School had one of its best teams ever under legendary coach Jack Fultz.

Bert Greene, whose 50-year record of being the region's No. 1 scorer was broken only this season, led the Comets to their third regional title in five years.

Olive Hill reached the state semifinals before injuries to both starting guards led to a bitter 67-65 defeat to North Marshall that Fultz went to his grave bemoaning. Lexington Dunbar beat the emotionally and physically drained Comets 88-45 in the third-place game.

Greene was the star but Larry Ader, Dale Barker and Larry Williams were other shooting stars for the Comets.

Olive Hill defeated Clark County 60-59 in the regional finals and also eliminated one of Vanceburg's best-ever teams 65-46 in the opening round.

The Comets saddled Vanceburg, led by Harold Billman, with four of its six losses in a 21-6 season. Two of those losses came in the postseason — the district finals and the regional opener (the regional was blind draw then). Vanceburg's coach was Bob Wright who, after that season, became coach of the Ashland Tomcats. In 1961, Wright guided the Tomcats to the 16th Region's last state title with a 36-1 season.

Billman, the fourth all-time scorer in Vanceburg/Lewis County history and the half-brother of 16th Region official Joe Billman, scored 41 against Olive Hill in the opener that season. That was a school record at the time. Gary Kidwell was a sophomore at Vanceburg High School who was a statistician '59 before being a player himself as a junior and senior.

1969

Ashland won the regional title behind the play of all-tournament selections Ray Kleykamp, Roger Baldrige, Fred Leibee and Johnny Mullins.

The Tomcats were never pushed in the regional, winning by margins of 26, 20 and 33 (84-51 over Menifee County in the finals) in one of the most dominating tournaments in history.

In the State Tournament, it was nail-biter time. The Tomcats edged Harlan 69-66 and then downed Shelby County 81-80 in the quarterfinals. The run for the title ended with an 82-80 loss to Ohio County on a last-second shot in the semifinals.

Louisville Central, a state powerhouse, went on to win the state title in runaway fashion.

It would be the best finish Ashland would make under Harold Cole.

1979

Ashland won the regional championship to end one of the most incredible streaks in area sports history. This was coach Paul Patterson's last season for the Tomcats and he finished his four-year Ashland career with a perfect record against 16th Region competition.

Ashland defeated Holy Family 65-53 in the regional championship game at Summit Junior High School (now Boyd County Middle School).

The Fighting Irish were a wonderful story that year as well with the likes of David Layne, Art McCullough, Mike Stewart and Danny Phillips.

Kenny Cobb, Greg McCauley and Doug Smith were among the stars for Ashland, which beat Owensboro 54-51 in the first round of the State Tournament and then bowed out in the quarterfinals to Mayfield, 56-54.
1989

Rowan County made it a three-peat of regional championships under coach Tim Moore with a win over Boyd County 74-59 in the finals.

Kelly Wells completed his high school career with a fourth consecutive appearance on the All-Region team, winning MVP honors. Rowan County broke out to a 20-0 lead in the championship game against the Lions, who never recovered.

The Vikings were eliminated in the first round of the State Tournament by Clark County 45-43.
1999

This one was sweet for Boyd County and bitter for Ashland.

Tyler Zornes' last-second bomb from about 35 feet gave Boyd County a 54-52 victory over the Tomcats. It came only seconds before Scott Johnson's clutch basket had put Ashland in front 52-51.

The Lions ran Zornes from the far sideline around midcourt. He curled around a screen and drilled the long bomb that stuck a dagger into Ashland's heart.

Boyd County coach Roger Zornes revealed to the press after the game that he dreamed his son was going to hit the game-winning shot the previous night.

Sometimes dreams do come true.

Pikeville beat Boyd County 58-51 in the first round of the State Tournament. Bryan Hall and Brian Biggs were other members of that Lions' team.

MARK MAYNARD can be reached at mmaynard@dailyindependent.com or (606) 326-2648.

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UNION COLLEGE NEWS

Five Union Alums Receive Awards at the Annual Homecoming Awards Banquet

Union College inducted three new alumni into the Union College Hall of Fame, named two new Union College Rising Stars and awarded the Alumni Distinguished Service Award at the annual Homecoming Banquet held on campus this past Saturday.



Left to right: Jessica Terry Bergman, Clevis Don Carter, President Edward de Rosset, Rev. Dr. Donald Durham, Bill Hill, and Harold Cole.

The event was a part of the weekend Homecoming activities that began Thursday with the annual golf tournament. The highlight of the weekend was the Inauguration Ceremony held on Friday. Union inaugurated Edward D. de Rosset as the College's 17th President. Homecoming activities concluded with a worship service held at Conway Boatman Chapel on Sunday.

Inducted into the Hall of Fame were: Clevis Don Carter '59, Educator's Hall of Fame; Bill A. Hill '70 and Harold F. Cole '54, Athletic Hall of Fame.

Also receiving awards were Blair Skidmore '95 and Jessica Terry Bergman '98. Both were named Union College Rising Stars.

In addition to this, the Reverend Dr. Donald William Durham '43, H'64 was awarded the Alumni Distinguished Service Award.

Union College Hall of Fame

The Hall of Fame is intended to honor Union College alumni, former or current faculty and recipients of honorary doctorates who have made outstanding contributions to their fields, been pioneers in their areas of expertise or provided leadership at state, regional or national levels.

Local resident, Clevis Don Carter, was inducted into Union's Educators Hall of Fame this past Saturday. Carter graduated from Union College in 1959 and went straight to work as a high school math and science teacher for the Knox County school system. He's been in front of a black board ever since.

Carter has spent the better part of his life as an educator and says he especially enjoys teaching future educators. "I enjoy teaching and working with students. I want to help them understand science and math and I especially enjoy working with students who are becoming teachers. I hope that I can continue making an impact in the education of students in our community."

Currently, Carter is retired from teaching and holds the rank of Associate Professor Emeritus of Physical Science at Union College. Prior to this appointment, Clevis Carter served as an Assistant Professor of Physical Science, Director of Coal Technology, and as an Instructor of Physical Science at Union.

Carter belongs to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the Kentucky Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the Cumberland Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the Kentucky Mathematics Association of Teachers of Teachers, the Fifth District Math Alliance and the Kentucky Science Teacher Association.

He has made presentations to both the Kentucky Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Cumberland Council of Teacher of Mathematics. In 1996, Mr. Carter served on the Steering Committee to prepare Kentucky's National Science Foundation teacher Preparation Proposal

through the Kentucky Department of Education. That year he also participated in a 4-state science and math technology implementation leadership training project sponsored by the Center of Excellence for Science and Mathematics Education from the University of Tennessee at Martin.

In addition to these projects, Carter also participated in the New Directions, New Connections, and New Horizons Project through Western Kentucky University and the Kentucky Middle Grades Mathematics Teacher Network Project through the University of Kentucky. Carter has also assisted with staff development programs for local schools in the areas of Mathematics and Science.

Clevis Carter graduated from Union College in 1959 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He graduated from George Peabody College for Teachers in 1965 with a Master's Degree in Math and Science Education and he also has a Rank II certificate in Math and Science, with a minor in History and Political Science.

Carter is married to Darla Carter and together they have 4 children and 9 grandchildren.

Inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame were Bill Hill and Harold Cole. Both are known for their accomplishments on the playing court as athletes and through coaching.

Hill received his Bachelor's degree in 1970. He was a four-year member of the Bulldogs, and a contributing member of three Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championship teams as well as the 1967-68 squad that captured the NAIA District 24 title and advanced to the NAIA National Championship Tournament.

A student of the game, Hill made an easy the transition to the coaching staff. While working on his Master's, Hill served as an assistant basketball coach during Union's 1970-71 campaign before embarking on an illustrious high school coaching career.

Hill spent 24 years as a boys' golf coach at Woodford County and Sayre high schools, but it was during his 17 seasons as a girls' basketball coach that he truly made his mark. In 13 seasons at Woodford County, Hill guided the Lady Jackets to two Sweet Sixteen appearances and was named the Region Coach of the Year three times, while finishing as the 2000 District Runner-Up during his four years at Sayre.

Hill's head coaching achievements reached the pinnacle in the spring of 2005 when he was inducted in the Kentucky High School Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame.

Pete Moore, who coached Hill during his years at Union, said, "When I retired to central Kentucky, people in the area would comment about Bill Hill and what a great coach he was, and I would say, 'That doesn't surprise me at all.' He was always a class act, and I knew that he would succeed in whatever he did in life."

In addition to his coaching duties, Hill served a combined 16 years as athletic director at Woodford County and Sayre. He also served as an assistant boys' basketball coach at Woodford County for 12 years where he earned Regional Athletic Director the Year honors three times. He also served as the president of the State Athletic Director Association in 1990-91. In 2005, Hill was recognized as the Kentucky High School Athletic Director of the Year.

Harold Cole, who was raised in Heidrick, was a four-year member of the Bulldog basketball squad, earning First Team All-Conference honor three years. Cole also competed on the track and field team for four years and for the Bulldog baseball team three years.

"While I did not play with Harold at Union," former men's basketball coach and athletic director Pete Moore said, "I heard lots of stories about his athletic prowess on the basketball court as well as the track."

A 1954 graduate, Cole spent two years in the United States Army before beginning his high school coaching career at Knox Central High School. Following nine seasons at the helm of the Panthers, he went to coach at Ashland High School from 1965 through 1972, guiding five teams to the Sweet Sixteen during his 16-year coaching career.

"Harold was fair, straight-forward and no nonsense in his approach to coaching," Moore noted. "He believed you got out of the game what you put into it, and there were no exceptions. That is why he was a very outstanding coach."

In 1972, Cole left teaching and coaching to pursue a career in hospital administration until his retirement in 1988. As he did in everything else, Cole excelled in this endeavor. Oakwood Hospital honored his years of service at their organization by naming their fieldhouse after him.

Union College Rising Star

The Rising Star Award, created in 2002, is given to outstanding Union alumni who have graduated within the past 10 years. Honorees were involved on campus while students, preferably in leadership roles, are enjoying career success and continually give back to their community and Union College.

Former local resident Blair Skidmore along with Jessica Terry Bergman were presented with the 2005 Rising Star Award during the banquet.

Skidmore is no stranger to Union College. A member of a Union College legacy family, he spent a lot of time on campus even before he became a college student. Skidmore's mother Jane and his grandmother Jane Blair are active friends of the college today as was his father and grandfather were in years past.

After graduating in 1995, Skidmore applied for and was hired as an Admissions Counselor at Union College. With the intention of attending law school, he took the LSAT test. However, after spending two years as a counselor, Skidmore realized that Higher Education was his future calling.

Skidmore said, "The success I have today is in large part due to the lessons I learned while at Union College, be it in the classroom, the theater, cheering at a football game or hanging out with fellow students in the student center and residence halls. Union has remained a large part of who I am today."

Today, as an Admissions Systems Analyst, Skidmore spends his days helping hopeful high school seniors realize their dreams of becoming graduates of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Prior to accepting this position, he spent 6 years working in the private sector of higher education helping colleges and universities as a Senior Support Analyst for a company now known as College Board in Atlanta, Georgia.

No matter where Skidmore's career has taken him, his love of service and service to his community has been a constant. Skidmore has performed in summer musical theater, worked with Habitat for Humanity and worked to support the High Museum of Art and Zoo in Atlanta. He also volunteers as an event coordinator for the Wang Foundation for Sight Restoration and, he says, "I have continued to support Union College at every opportunity."

Skidmore's support of Union College is evidenced by his service on the Alumni Board, assuming the responsibilities of class agent, hosting local alumni gatherings, and continuing to act as a Union College ambassador wherever he goes.

He is married to Joanne Thompson and they are expecting their first child in late December.

Also named a Rising Star was Jessica Terry Bergman. Bergman spent her time at Union College developing her leadership skills, participating in service projects, and taking part in campus activities. And she's still doing that today. Only now, Bergman's involvement with student life and activities is as Dean of Students at Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina.

Prior to serving as Dean, Bergman served as the Director of Community Outreach at Lees-McRae managing AmeriCorp and the Bonner Leaders program. She created the Freshmen Emerging Leaders Program, designed leadership training curriculum for community partners and students, and further developed relationships between the campus and the community.

In addition to her work with students, Bergman served on the Hispanic Outreach Committee, the Avery County Interagency Alcohol and Other Drug committee, the AmeriCorp Advisory and the Avery Children's Collaborative committee.

Bergman has a resume chock full of committees, councils, programs and forums that reflect her love of service and her desire to contribute to her community. This extensive list that fills the pages of her vita harkens back to days spent participating in river, road, and community clean-ups and swinging hammers and wielding saws during repair affair as a student at Union College.

Bergman graduated from Union College in 1998 with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology. She then went on to graduate from Appalachian State University with a Masters of Arts in Geography. Bergman is married to Matthew Bergman, a '99 graduate of Union.

Union College Alumni Association Award for Distinguished Service

Service to the community is a common thread that runs throughout time and is a core value at Union. To celebrate this, the Alumni Association Award for Distinguished Service is presented to an alumnus or alumna who has demonstrated a commitment to promoting the goals and mission of the Alumni Association, and who has proven leadership and service within his or her community.

Because he has spent a lifetime in service to his community, the Reverend Dr. Donald William Durham was named the 2005 recipient of this award.

Rev. Durham graduated from Union College in 1943, from Duke University Divinity School in 1947, and he received an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Union College in 1964.

Rev. Durham's service work spans the globe. From England to Ireland, from Peru to the Philippines, from Lexington, Kentucky to this small college town of Barbourville, the effects of Rev. Durham's service, community involvement and leadership have been felt around the world.

In 1944, Rev. Durham joined the United Methodist Church as an ordained Deacon. In 1946, he was ordained as an Elder and from there he went on to serve six pastorates from 1943 to 1978. Rev. Durham has also served as superintendent of the Maysville District of the United Methodist Church.

In addition to his work as a pastor, Rev. Durham served as the Executive Director of the Methodist Children's Home of Kentucky in Versailles. Currently, Rev. Durham serves as part-time minister of membership cultivation at Centenary United Methodist Church in Lexington.

Throughout his career, Rev. Durham received many honors, served as delegate to the General Conference of the UMC, as delegate to two World Methodist Conferences and was chosen by the Boards of Missions and Evangelism to conduct preaching missions to Peru and to the Philippines. He served as a delegate to three Jurisdictional Conferences of the UMC, as a member of the Board of Directors for the Red Bird Mission in Beverly, Kentucky, as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Methodist Children's Home and has served as a member of the Union College Board of Trustees for over 40 years.

The list of his service appointments doesn't stop here. To name all the boards, all the committees, and account for all the time he's spent helping and serving others would be a daunting task. And it seems as though, at the ripe young age of 84, Rev. Durham is still growing that list today.

Rev. Durham said this about his many accomplishments and honors. "One of the happiest moments of my life was after teaching Sunday School for twelve years [at Lexington Centenary Methodist Church], I decided to resign. Without my knowledge, the class realizing that I had this love for Union College, raised enough money to establish an endowed scholarship at Union in my name."

Currently Rev. Durham is married to Gloria Harrell. Before marrying his wife Gloria in 1991, he was married to his Union College sweetheart, Jean Knuckles, who passed away in 1990. Together the couple had four children: Karen Louise, Donna Jean, Kimberly Ann and Donald William, Jr.

October 10, 2005

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HAROLD COLE

1965-66	25.7	DISTRICT CHAMPS REGION CHAMPS STATE QUARTERFINALIST
1966-67	24.5	DISTRICT CHAMPS REGION RUNNER UP
1967-68	22.10	DISTRICT CHAMPS REGION RUNNER UP
1968-69	25.9	DISTRICT CHAMPS REGION CHAMPS STATE FINAL 4
1969-70	21.8	DISTRICT CHAMPS REGION CHAMPS STATE FIRST ROUND
1970-71	26.4	DISTRICT CHAMPS REGION CHAMPS STATE QUARTERFINALIST
1971-72	28.3	AIT CHAMPS FAYETTE CO. INVITATIONAL CHAMPS DISTRICT CHAMPS

REGION RUNNERUP
RANKED #1 IN STATE

COACHING RECORD: 171.46 (7 YEARS)

7 DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIPS

4 REGION CHAMPIONSHIPS

#2 ALL TIME WINS @ ASHLAND

AVERAGED 24 WINS PER SEASON