

2-14-2000

TO: Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame  
ATTN: Nominations  
2280 Executive Drive  
Lexington, KY 40505

FROM: Barry Vaughn  
125 Daybreak Drive  
Hanson, KY 42413

With great pride I nominate Mr. Robert B. Fox for your consideration and hopeful placement into the Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame. Bob Fox, who has been often referred to as the Rick Pitino of the late 60's, had an outstanding ability to earn respect from his players by taking raw talent and turning it into perfection through constant encouragement and support. Bob's players were his family they were important to him and each player knew their part in the team's quest for perfection. Not only did he earn respect from his players, but also his students, staff of teachers, and citizens of the community. The late Elmer Kelly with WFMW radio once said that whatever it is that courses through Fox's veins should be extracted and bottled. The vitamin industry would have its toughest competitor. His enthusiasm was contagious to all that came in contact with him.

Robert B. Fox

Bob Fox was a three-year letterman in basketball and baseball at Earlington High School from 1945-1948. He graduated from Western Kentucky University and began his coaching career at Whitesville Junior High School. His gift of putting success together in such a small time frame is astounding. After one year at Whitesville he accepted a High School head-coaching job at North Warren High School. He served at that small Warren County School for four years ending with an 86-31 record and took his team to the Regional Tournament twice during that span for the first time in the school's history. Fox returned to his alma mater in 1962 as both coach and principal, replacing James Larmouth, who had moved up to Superintendent. During the next five years Fox compiled a 141-26 record, which included his 1964-65 team that won 30 consecutive games before losing in the semi-finals of the Regional Tournament. The 1965-66 team was 29-6 and made it to the Sweet Sixteen, only to lose to Harrison County in the first round. The following year 1966-67 was to be a different story. Earlington High School won it all, capping a 38-1 record by defeating Covington Catholic 54-53 in the final game. Considering the fact that Earlington was a small town of 2800 people with a school enrollment of 225, he did this while being the administrative head of both the Earlington Elementary and High School but still had time to coach the Yellowjackets, which is quite amazing. It was during the 1967 Kentucky State Basketball Tournament that Coach Adolph Rupp called the Yellowjacket press "The best high school press I've ever seen." Following the tournament Fox was selected by the Associated Press, the

United Press, the Courier Journal, and the KHSAA as Coach of the Year in Kentucky and also coached the "West All Star" squad. Fox left coaching the next year to further his education. In 1968 Coach Fox earned his Doctorate Degree in the field of Education from the University of Kentucky. That same year he joined the staff at Murray State University. He taught in the School of Education and worked with hundreds of student teachers until he retired in 1983.

Success in many instances is measured in time. Coach Bob Fox coaching career on the court was short but his accomplishments were great. A nine year coaching career that produced a 227- 57 won / loss record, winning the Kentucky State High School Championship in 1967, voted Coach Of The Year by the Associated Press, United Press, the Courier Journal, the KHSAA as Coach of the Year and finished by coaching the "West All Star" squad to his final court victory.

Radio Station



"Serving Western Kentucky"

A M 730 KC  
F M 93.9 MG

MADISONVILLE, KY.

When Bob Fox took over the basketball job at Earlington from personable Jim Larmouth, his first statement was, "this is a heck of a big pair of shoes to fill". At the moment, the former Jacket star and coach at North Warren for the past four years, has not only put both feet firmly in the shoes, he has laced them very neatly.

Last night, Fox won his fifth straight game, nipping a stout Holy Name club by holding on in the final minutes. This little guy with the big heart and a burning desire to win, has whipped a Jacket team into a regional contender in a hurry. He got only one starter from last year's five which upset Princeton Dotson in the regional final after nipping Madisonville on the way. Earlington had been beaten by Madisonville in the district finale in Maronn Gym.

Fox, a fireeater of the first water, is a whirling dynamo on the bench. If you don't believe it, watch him the next time you see a Jacket game. There's not a boy on the floor who works harder. He is up and down, in and out, over and under every movement on the boards, and must be ready for a strait jacket when the final whistle is blown. Whatever it is that courses through Fox's veins should be extracted and bottled. The vitamin industry would have its toughest competitor.

Fox had a tremendous challenge at Earlington this year, and he knew it. He wasted no words of lament over having only one starter from last season. He simply went to work with long, rugged practice sessions, burned the midnight oil making up his proposed lineups, then set about to make his intentions jell. Fox will tell you he has used no great amount of strategy in fashioning five straight wins. Hard work, dedication, and the will to win has stamped his actions so far, and this system is not likely to change.

Perhaps the secret of the whole show has been the fact that Fox did come into a solid reserve five which Larmouth left from last season. He had some good height and speed but four of the present starters had not worked together as a varsity unit. Perhaps another measure of credit should go to Wesley Coffman, the lone holdover, but one of the best. Coffman, who comes from a basketball family on both sides, is the playmaker and court general. He can play every position, and often does in the course of a ballgame. Coffman's greatest, and perhaps only fault in the past, has been an explosive temper, which he is fast learning to control. Once he gets that whipped completely, the lad will reach the potential of one of Earlington's greatest and one of the all-time bests in the region.

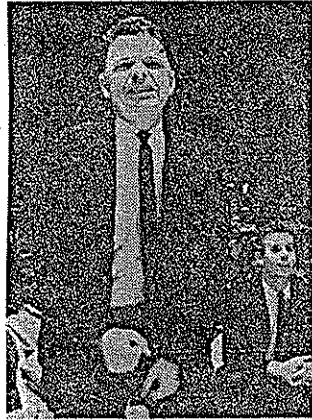
Fox has only one big element to watch, that of not burning his ballclub out before the do or die district tournament. All these victories are good and every team likes to put 'em on the record books, but after all, the sudden death action in the district tournament is what every team aims for from the start of the season. The more the Jackets win, the more the pressure is going to mount, and Fox knows there's a breaking point for prep school youngsters. There won't be a lot of moaning and groaning if somebody nails the club in the near future. Fox, best of all, will realize that a setback by a good club often helps more than hinders a team.

Earlington fans are a little surprised, greatly overjoyed by the turn of events thus far, and Fox has done his job well. Our congratulations to the coach, his staff and the team for a quick jump right into the state picture. Anyway you look at it, a Fox leading a swarm of Yellowjackets is a pretty potent force.

DEAR BOB: Since you would be practicing at 4:30, you'd miss the sports editorial. Thought you might like a copy of it.

ELMER

# *Earlington Coach Bob Fox—*



**C'mon, You Guys**



**Now That's Better**

## *—A Man of Many Moods*



**Coach's Timeout**



**Time to Worry Again**



Staff Photos by Bud Kamenish  
**Let's Try Play No. 5**



**Earlington Coach Bob Fox Is Man Of Many Moods**

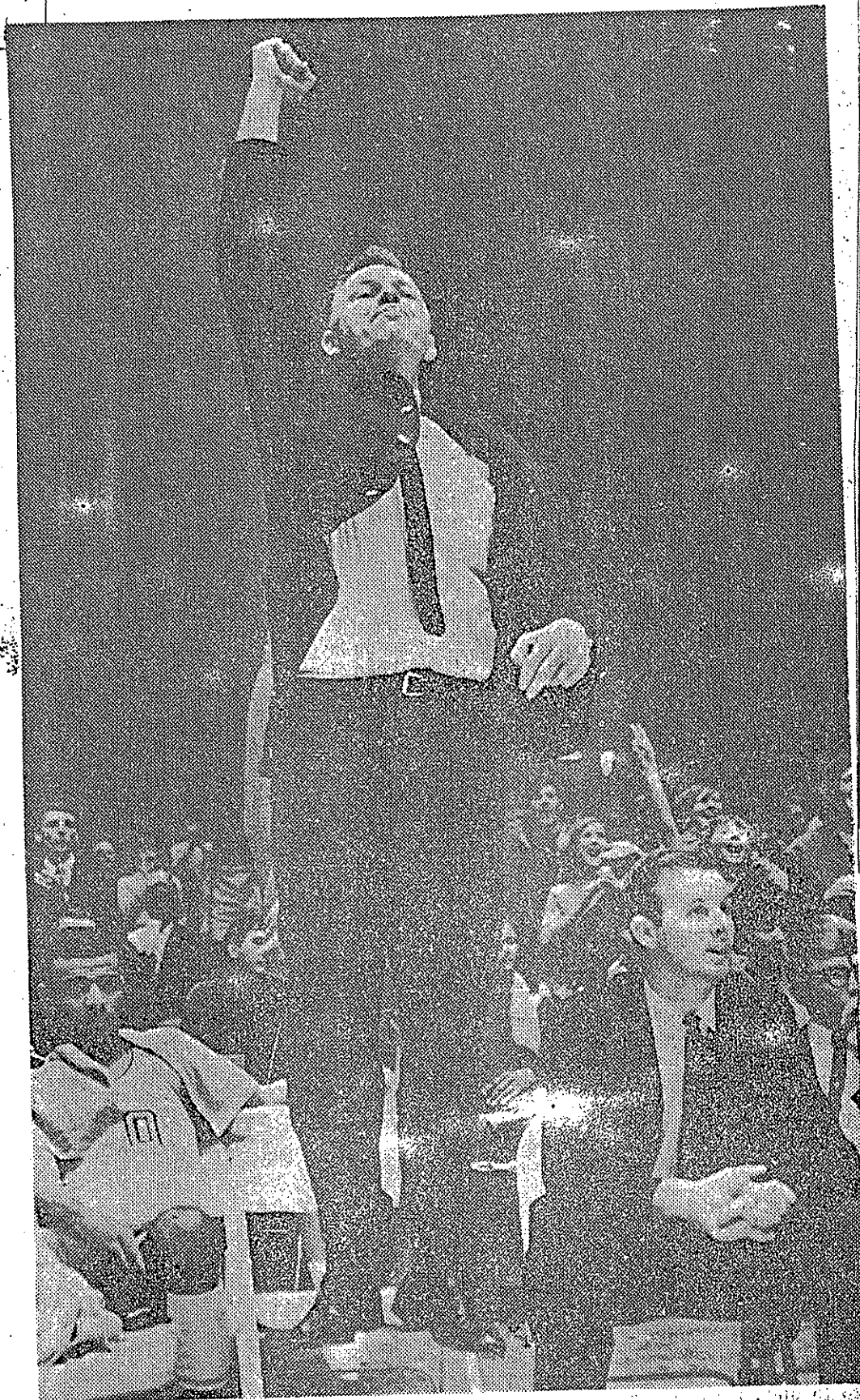




**EXPRESSIVE EARLINGTON** Coach Box Fox leaps off the bench to watch his Yellowjackets in Louisville Invitational Tournament play. One of two Western Kentucky teams to receive a tourney bid, Earlington was the only team to survive Thursday's openers.

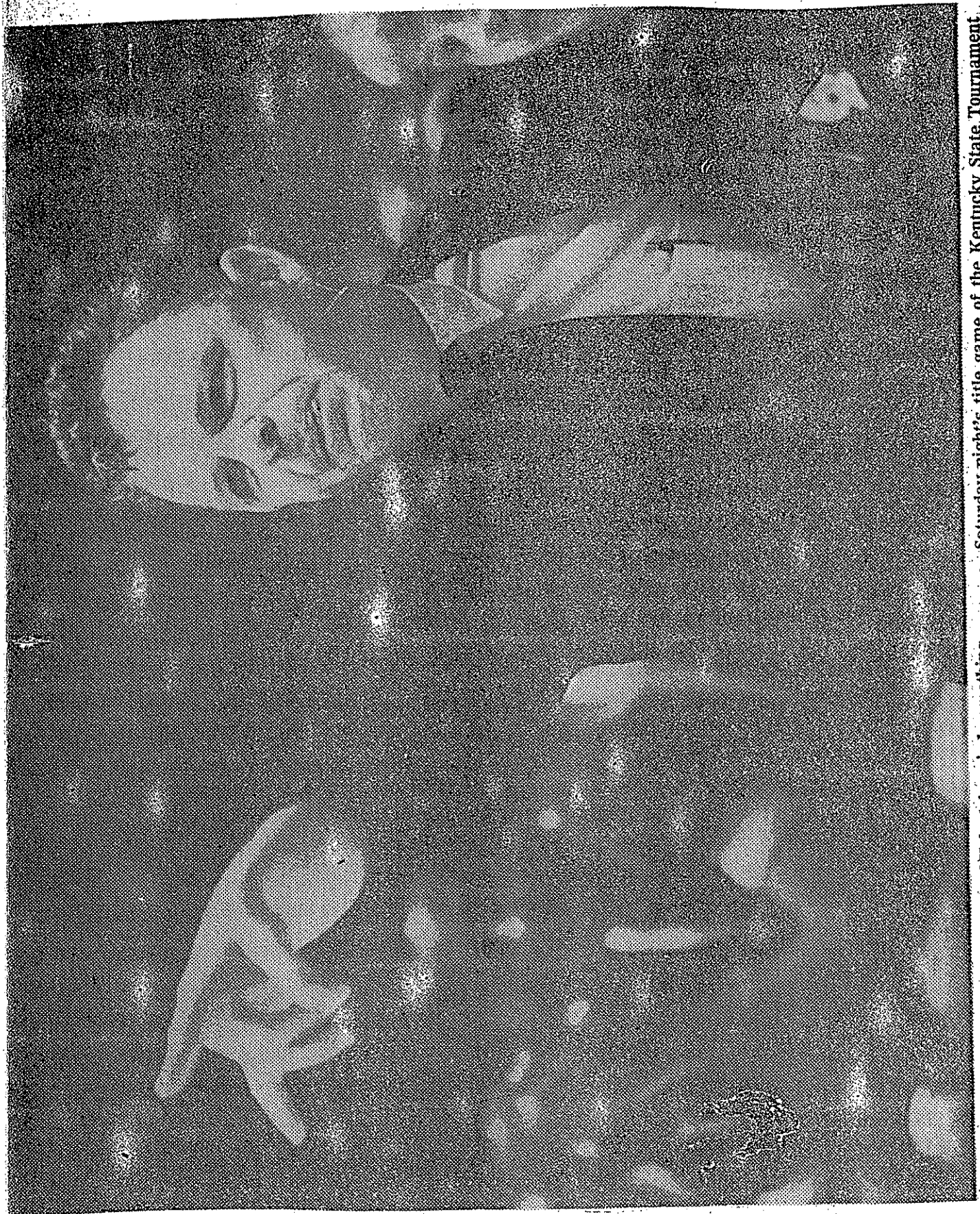






Staff Photo

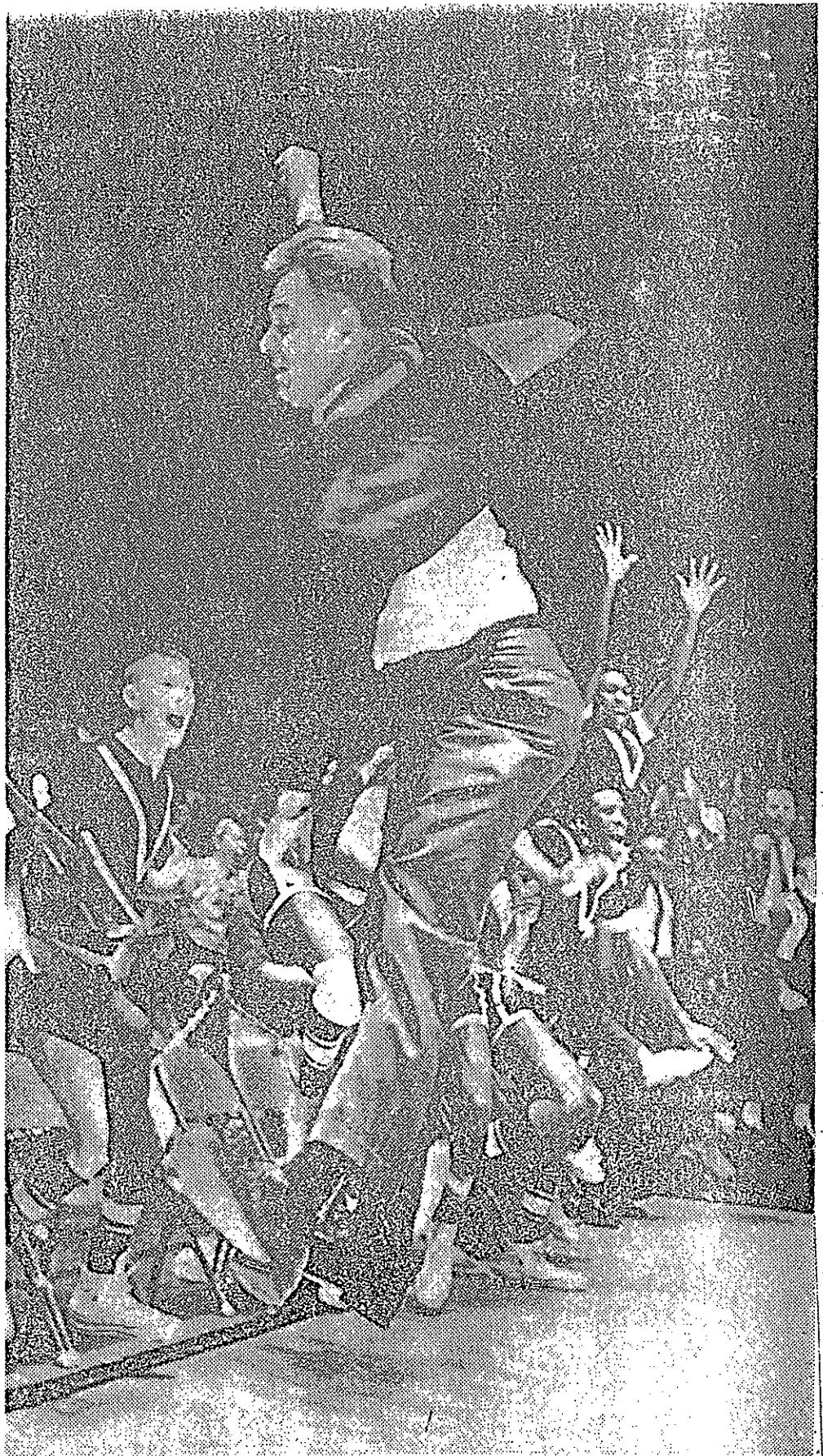
UP IN THE AIR . . . Earlington coach Bob Fox leaps into the air as his team scores a late basket in its 69-64 semifinal win over Breathitt County in the State Basketball Tournament. Earlington's Gregg Martin sits at left and assistant David Jenkins is at right.



**EARLINGTON COACH BOB FOX** had in mind something for his Yellowjackets that did not exactly coincide with what they were doing on the floor as he shouts out instructions in

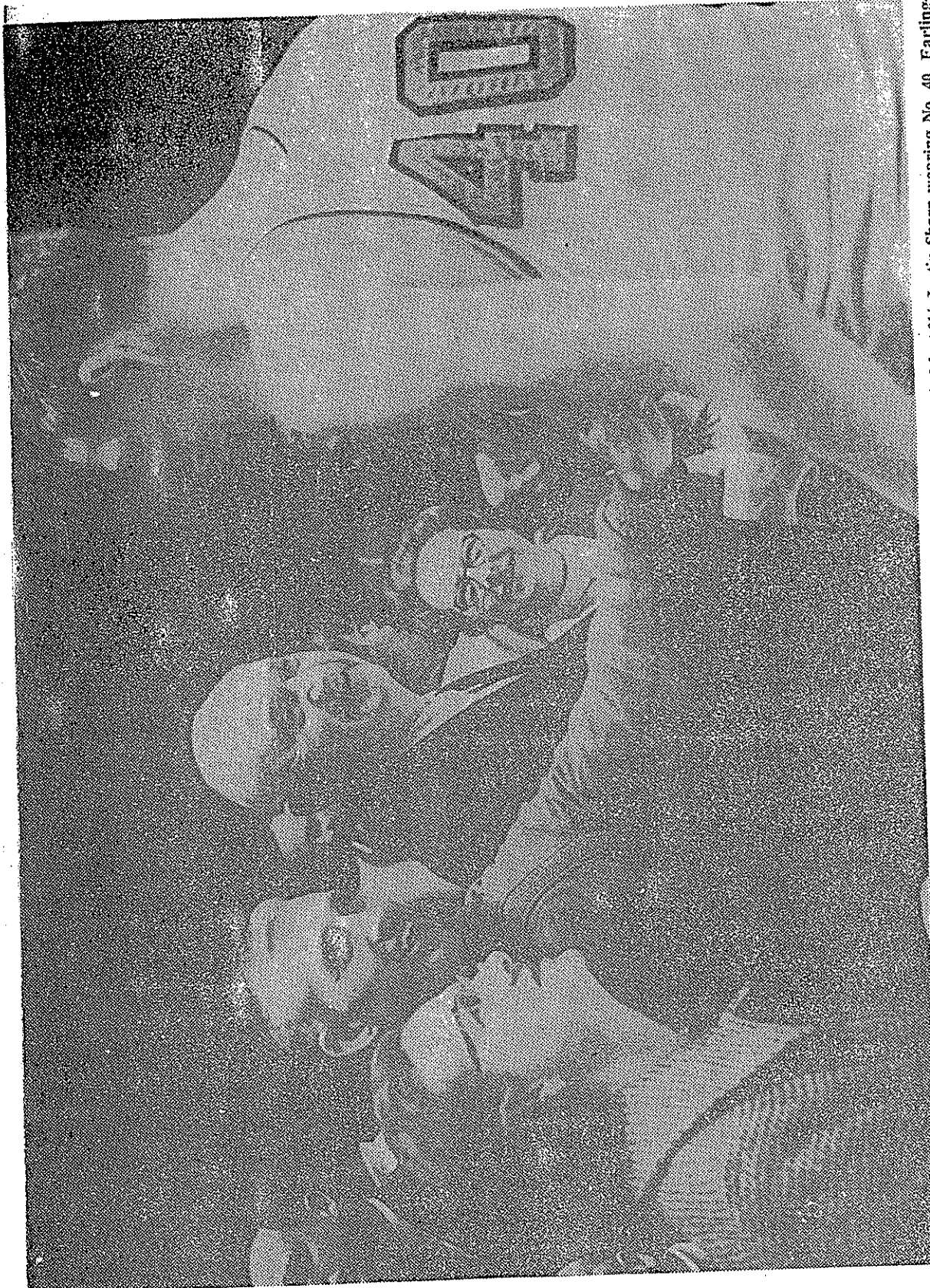
Saturday night's title game of the Kentucky State Tournament against Covington Catholic in Louisville's Freedom Hall. (Sunday Staff Photo by J. Bruce Baumann)





Staff Photo by C. Thomas Hardin

**BLAST-OFF!** . . . No, it's not a male cheerleader. It's Earlington High School coach Bob Fox soaring after his Second Region champions edged Covington Catholic 54-53 last night on a last-second shot in the State High School Tournament final at Freedom Hall.



ington team and 175 pound, 6-foot-3½ Justin Sharp wearing No. 40. Earlington was Region Two champ and went on to beat Covington Catholic, 54-53. (Sunday Staff Photo by J. Bruce Baumann).

KENTUCKY BASKETBALL DEAN ADOLPH RUPP was a keen spectator at the Kentucky State High School 50th anniversary basketball tournament held in Freedom Hall, Louisville. He had high praise for the Earl-



# IN MY OPINION

## Practice Pays Off



By JIM WALKER

Although Earlington has won 34 basketball games this season against only one loss, the victories have made headlines in papers only the day after the game was won the night before.

But, In My Opinion, Earlington's 34 victories were chalked up many hours before the game was actually played. They won in practice.

True, coach Bob Fox has, as the old saying goes, "the horses to do the job".

But what good is a race horse if he's never been trained to run?

While a lot of teams are having practice, it's really a picnic compared to the Yellowjackets.

After an hour or so watching the Jackets in practice it isn't hard to realize how they have won 34 ball games, the most of any team in the 50th Annual Kentucky High School State Tournament, starting Wednesday in Louisville's Freedom Hall.

Earlington's practice sessions start when Fox walks on the court and says, "let's go". It doesn't stop until he blows his whistle and when he does, everyone had better stop, look and listen.

You can hear a pin drop from a downtown street corner. He speaks in two tones of voice, one quiet, but heard, another rattling the rafters, and also heard.

Mistakes are not permitted to go on. They do things over and over until its right.

Fox praises his players when they hustle and come up with plays and he lets them know when they are not hustling and not making the plays.

No heads are rammed against the wall, no one is slapped around and no one is thrown out of the gym. But you don't loaf.

Fox demands nothing less than a 100 per cent effort 100 per cent of the time and he gives his players that in return.

If mistakes continue, someone finds themselves sitting on the sideline or running laps. There is always someone ready to take their place.

But the players love every minute of it even if it means working when others are out enjoying the better things of life.

Right now, nothing is better than being a Yellowjacket.

They are the kings of Second Region basketball and favored to meet Owensboro in the state tournament finals Saturday night.

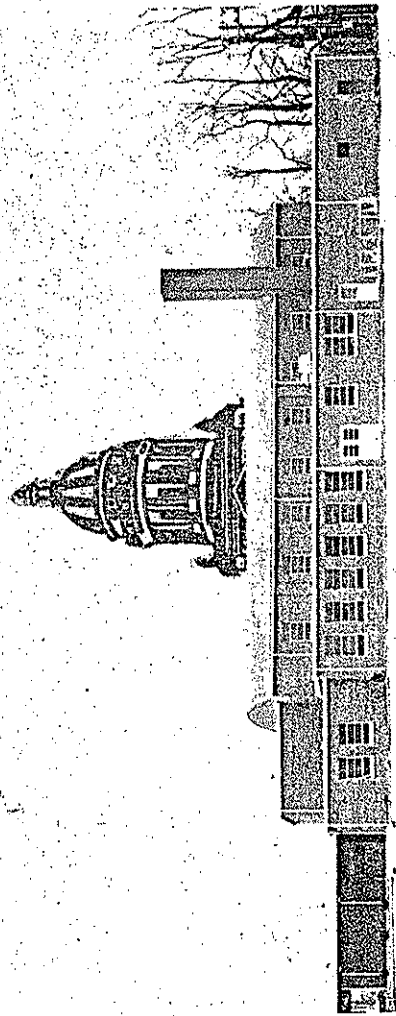
Even though Earlington's defense is its key destroying weapon, the Jackets work against a press as much as possible.

The Earlington guards, Greg Martin and Arthur Johnson work against four defensive men in getting the ball across the 10-second line and Fox gives them just that much time to do it.

The entire starting team works against a 7-man defensive team when Fox thinks they need it.

The popular Earlington coach won't stand for "horsing around" when there is work to be done.

# Earlington - The Basketball Capital Of Kentucky



THIS IS EARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, WHICH TODAY HOUSES KENTUCKY HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS.



EARLINGTON COACH BOB FOX RIDES SHOULDERS OF HIS VICTORIOUS JACKETS IN LOUISVILLE SATURDAY NIGHT, AT SAME TIME EYING SHINING CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY.

## HE DOES DOUBLE DUTY

# Earlington's Fox Is Voted Coach of Year

United Press International

Earlington coach Bob Fox, one of the three remaining principal-coaches in the state, today was named high school basketball Coach of the Year in Kentucky by the United Press International Board of Coaches.

Fox is administrative head of both the Earlington Elementary and High schools, but found the time to lead the Yellow Jackets to a 34-1 season and a berth in the state tournament as 2nd Region titlists.

Earlington's opening game in the state tournament will be against Russell tomorrow at 2 p.m.

The 36-year-old mentor has established a fine five-year record of 137-26 at a school which has an enrollment of 225 students, less than half of them boys. He previously coached at North Warren High School in Bowling Green, where he had an 86-31 record.

Fox said he knew at the beginning of the year his Yellow Jackets would have a fine season because he only lost one starter from the team that won the region crown last year. He said, however, the real acid test came at Central City in December.

"We beat Central City in the finals of their own tournament on their own

floor," Fox said. "If you don't think that's hard to do, ask Owensboro coach Bob Watson about it."

Earlington's only loss of the season came in the Louisville Invitational Tournament when Male beat them 59-55.

Fox said the trip to the state tournament last year ended in the first round when Earlington lost to Harrison County by six points. He said the added year and tournament experience his players have had should enable the Jackets to

go farther than the first round this year. "I guess you could say the key to our success this year has been balance," Fox said.

"All five starters are averaging in double figures and the three seniors keep the squad steady."

Fox played his prep ball at Earlington during the 1945-1948 seasons. He returned to his alma mater in 1962 and lives at Earlington with his wife and two children.

## Another Thrill for Bob Fox— Coach of the Year in C-J's Poll

By BOB WHITE

Courier-Journal & Times Staff Writer

Trying to outyell 17,000 State Tournament basketball fans would make anybody hoarse.

So Earlington High coach Bob Fox yesterday was just beginning to get his voice back.

Last Saturday, Fox experienced the greatest thrill of his life in athletics when Earlington won the State Tournament on a last-second shot by Tyrone Hopson.

Yesterday, another thrill came Fox's way.

He learned he had been chosen The Courier-Journal's Coach of the Year.

"Man, oh man, what an honor," replied Fox, who recalled, "I couldn't catch my breath for 10 minutes after we beat Covington Catholic.

"Then at Sunday's celebration, our gym was full, but I couldn't say a word," Fox said. "Jim Larmouth, our superintendent (and ex-Earlington coach), had to speak for me."

Fox, 36, succeeds Shelby County's Bill Harrell as Coach of the Year. Harrell won the honor in 1965 and 1966.

However, Fox won't be able to duplicate Harrell's two-year hold on the coveted award.

"The State Tournament wrapped up my coaching career," he said. "But not because I was the only Earlington coach to lose a game this season."

He was referring to the varsity's 32-1 record, as compared to the 25-0 and 16-0 marks compiled by the Earlington B-team and freshman squads, respectively.

### Kids Loved Press

Fox's successor has not been named, but David Jenkins has been his assistant four years. "I hope he gets it," Fox said.

While the 5-foot-8 Fox "loves to fish and hunt," he doesn't plan any vacation soon. Being Earlington's principal, he'll hold down that job until school is out.

Then he'll move his wife Pat, daughter Kim, 8, and son Greg, 7, to Lexington where he'll begin work on his doctor's degree in education foundation at the University of Kentucky.

Fox's five-year won-lost record at Earlington was 141-26 and included Second Region championships in 1966 and 1967. He credits his full-court zone press for producing Earlington's first state title.

Coach of the Year balloting, John Burr, whose Adair County team had a 29-5 record, was third, followed by John Rendek of Male High's Louisville Invitational Tournament titlists.

Jack Black of Central Kentucky Conference champion Frankfort placed fifth, ahead of Owensboro's Bobby Watson, Ashland's Harold Cole, Allen County's

Tommy Long, Breathitt County's Fairce Woods and St. Xavier's Joe Reibel.



Staff Photo

COACH OF YEAR . . . Earlington's Bob Fox, shown holding daughter Kim after a State Tournament victory, has been chosen as The Courier-Journal's Coach of the Year.

