

Listing of Letters of Recommendation Letters For Hoover Niece for KHSAA-HOF

Mike Holcomb	Breathitt Co Head Coach
Hillard Howard	Retired Head Coach
Bart Rison	Former Head Coach Montgomery Co., Assistant Estill Co.
Jeff Saylor	Superintendant Estill County
Sharon Niece	Wife of Hoover Niece
Chris Winkler	Former Player for Coach Niece current Principal at Estill Co. High School
Tony Sergent	Superintendant Letcher County
Phillip Haywood	Head Coach Pike County
Mike Jones	Former Player for Coach Niece current Head Coach Estill County
Tom Larkey	Head Coach Perry County High School
Dudley Hilton	Head Coach Bell County
Chuck Smith	Head Coach Boyle County
Jeremy Niece	Former Player and Son to Hoover
Bill Beard	Former Principal Estill County High School
Dave Harper	Former Player Retired Post Master , Indiana
Robbie/Billy Wiseman	Former Players (Brothers)
Andar Niece	Former Player and Son to Hoover
Stanley Niece	Former Player and Son to Hoover
John Abney	Former Player and Retired Physical Therapist
Buddy Arvin	Former Player and Asst. Principal Estill County High School
Johnny Brown	Retired Head Coach Pulaski Co.
Sam Harp	Former Head Coach Danville High, current Head Coach Anderson Co. High
William Hardy	Former Player currently Manager Carhartt's Factory
Kevin Williams	Former Player currently Estill County Judge Executive
Bee Williams	Former Player currently Irvine Municipal Utilities
Beetle Lisle	Former Player owner of Electric Business

Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame Committee
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40505

May 4, 2018

RE: Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame Recommendation Letter

Hall of Fame Selection Committee:

It is my distinct honor and gives me great pleasure to nominate Hoover Daryl Niece for the Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame. Mr. Niece was a very successful high school football coach, who also was outstanding in his role as track coach for thirty (30) years at Estill County High School. He was also an outstanding football and basketball player at Whitesburg High School.

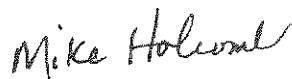
Mr. Niece coached countless teams who won numerous games and meets. He had the great ability to get the most out of his players, not only in competition, but also in the classroom. He was a unique coach who had an uncanny ability to communicate and relate to his players with diverse backgrounds.

Mr. Niece was a very colorful coach, whom his players, colleagues, school, and community loved. I believe that Mr. Niece built the Estill County football program into a program that was feared and respected by opponents for all of the thirty years he coached. He is worthy of a place in the Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Mr. Niece was community oriented and was always willing to volunteer for specific projects that would benefit Estill County. During his tenure as coach, the athletic facilities at Estill County were built and upgraded. In fact, the school board decided to honor Coach Niece by naming the new facility "*The Hoover Niece Football Field*".

Hoover Niece was and remains an outstanding role model for the youth of Estill County. He is deserving of this honor, and I fully support his selection to the Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,



Mike Holcomb



Don Richardson <don.richardson@estill.kyschools.us>

Hoover

2 messages

Hillard Howard <hillard.howard@yahoo.com>

Thu, Mar 29, 2018 at 11:10 AM

To: don.richardson@estill.kyschools.us

Great honor for me to recommend my friend and brother in coaching to the Kentucky Hall of Fame. Worked extremely hard, and dedicated his life of coaching to his teams and schools. I recommend him without reservation.

Hillard Howard, Pikeville High School Panthers. State Champs 1987, 1988, 1989.

Sent from my iPhone

Hillard Howard <hillard.howard@yahoo.com>

Thu, Mar 29, 2018 at 11:16 AM

To: don.richardson@estill.kyschools.us

Great honor for me to recommend my friend Hoover Neice and brother in coaching to the Kentucky Hall of Fame. Worked extremely hard, and dedicated his life of coaching to his teams and schools. I recommend him without reservation.

[Quoted text hidden]



Matthew D. Thompson, Ed.D., Superintendent
Alice Anderson, Chairperson
Bill R. Morgan, Vice Chairperson

High Expectations + Compassion = Growth for Every Student

Carmela Fletcher-Green, Board Member
Daniel Freeman, Ed.D., Board Member
Sharon Smith-Breiner, Board Member

4/20/18

K.H.S.A.A. Hall of Fame Committee

I am writing in reference to Coach Hoover Niece, former longtime football coach at Estill County High School. I played for Coach Niece in 1972 and 1973 and coached under him from 1979 through 1985. He was a great mentor for me as I was starting my coaching career. Coach Niece spent all 27 years at Estill County and the football field is named after him. Coach Niece is certainly worthy of induction into the Hall of Fame for his lifetime of service to the youth and community of Estill County, I highly recommend him.

Bart Rison
Former Basketball Coach
Estill County and Montgomery County High School



Estill County Schools

Every Child Succeeds

January 30, 2018

Commissioner Julian Tackett and Members of the KHSAA Hall of Fame Selection Committee.

I began my coaching career in Bell County over 30 years ago. The coaches that I had the privilege to meet during the first decade of my career left me with a lasting impression that had a profound impact on my entire career. Hoover Niece of Estill County was one of those individuals. For 27 years' he walked the sidelines during Estill County Football games leading the Engineers into battle every Friday night, but that does not tell the full story.

During football camp every fall, I was able to witness his ability to communicate with his team and saw firsthand his ability to rally his players around a common goal. I saw boys grow up to be men over the years and I can still hear them singing "I've Been Working on the Railroad" as they made their morning run to the gates of Feltner 4H Camp, but this does not tell the full story.

It has now been 20 years since Coach Niece stood on the sideline for the last time. Many things change over the years and now because of the relationships formed so many years ago, I am the Superintendent of Estill County Schools. Now I have the ability to see the lasting impact made by a coach that has been retired for many years. Hoover's boys are everywhere and most importantly, many of them have grown up to be leaders not only in Estill County, but also all over Eastern Kentucky. The same hard nose determination and passion that drove their coach now lives in the very soul of each one of them. The field on Engineer Drive may be known as "Hoover Niece Field", but I submit to you that his greatest accomplishment is the testimony of the lives of players and coaches he worked with over his career.

It is an honor for me to recommend Hoover Niece as a nominee for the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,


Jeff Saylor, Superintendent

February 19, 2018

Greetings to all those concerned:

My husband, Hoover D. Dierce, didn't just coach; he gave his heart to coaching! In making this commitment, he didn't take anything away from me and our family. His heart grew to fill both areas of his life. Through the years, the areas merged into one for all of us.

To say that Hoover loved coaching is just not enough. He loved the game, loved the teams - and the individuals, and loved seeing the growth that he proved does come from hard work. He applied his belief to planning, preparation, practicing, and finally, learning from mistakes. He loved his coaching partners who left us with memories and friendships that have lasted a lifetime.

Hoover is a mountain man who brought with him to coaching, the honorable mountain qualities of

loyalty, respect, resourcefulness, pride, and honor. He, his coaches, and their teams have remained loyal to each other. The love and respect they mutually share is experienced daily.

His resourcefulness was never more evident than when empty fields became practice fields when the need arose. Clearing those fields of rocks became a team endurance drill. A nearby hill became the ultimate challenge at the end of grueling practices. Past players became sources of insight and expertise into specific positions. He built his teams and their tradition using all the resources he found.

Hoover spoke to the hearts of the young team players they were, but more importantly, to the men they would become. He believed in his players; he trusted in them; he worked for them; and he pushed them to reach a higher best in both their personal and team levels.

Nooner gave them all he had, bringing some home for a time into our family. Always he brought them home in his heart and his mind. He picked players up for practice and games and took them home afterwards. I remember hour-long routes through our rural community where transportation possibilities are limited. He hugged, fussed, laughed, and corrected. The heart of it all is that he loved! As his wife, I was blessed to watch and share in the beauty of it.

Nooner's boys, as they come to call themselves, are fathers and grandfathers now. They are farmers, factory workers, and business men. They have filled positions as diverse as the military and the ministry. They are public servants in fire, police, and medical fields. They teach; they

coach; they volunteer; and they give. Those who can, work. Those who can't are found, bravely and courageously fighting their daily battles with health and disappointments. Through these men, we see that the good Hooper has done lives on after football.

Hooper has exemplified the ideal of coach. He has changed lives by devoting his life to building a tradition of excellence in competition in Estill County.

I submit this letter, most respectfully, as a wife who is forever grateful for Coach Hooper Niece's influence in the lives of, not only our own three sons, but in the lives of hundreds of Estill County athletes.

Sincerely,
Sharon G. Niece

ESTILL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
397 Engineer Road
Irvine, Kentucky 40336

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with great pride, pleasure and sincerity that I write this letter to recommend Hoover Niece for admittance into the Kentucky High School Coaches Hall of Fame. I had the good fortune of playing for him and his assistants from 1979 to 1982. Hoover had the unique ability to make players through the years understand that we were part of a football family, a brotherhood with a bond of love and a connection that would give us strength and endurance for life. We all still recognize ourselves as Hoover's boys and take joy in sharing our stories. Even though we may be separated by decades, the boys from the 1970s share similar stories as those from the 1980s or 90s. The reason is that Hoover always had the same basic approach to coaching young men or dealing with people in general. However, that approach was not built around a program or an agenda. It flowed from his personality and core convictions. Hoover valued every player that came out to play. He made sure every assistant coach valued every player as well. In this manner, the family circle was complete because you didn't become one of Hoover's Boys by virtue of playing time or even athletic ability. When you put the uniform on and were willing to lay it on the line in practice, you were in the family. To this day Hoover is as close to those players who did not get to play very much as those who played every down. The standard by which alumni players gauge themselves is not by who made All State, scored touchdowns, or played in college. It is simply, "I played for Hoover Niece."

On the technical side of things, Hoover was an excellent teacher of the skills required to succeed at all positions on the field. As a player, I can remember how he could teach the finer points of punting as well as how to play defensive end or quarterback. His first approach was always to make you feel like a valuable part of the team family, which in turn greatly increased our ability to pay attention. His "teacher first" mentality combined with his fatherly figure type aura gave him the credibility to be a strong disciplinarian. He could yell and shoot fire and brimstone from his mouth, for sure. However, he only did that when there was a lack of effort or laziness on our part.

Another positive aspect of his technical skill was in the matching of a player's ability to what position he placed them. In his 5-2 Monster defense there were differences between left and right end or tackle positions. Each one required certain assignments of which Hoover was able to see where a player could perform his best based on their particular skill set. The result was always a hard hitting and physically punishing defense that never gave up. While Hoovers defensive motto was "bend but don't break, the reality was more like a constantly hard-hitting attack swarm.

Another aspect of his coaching belief was that all players should be in their best physical shape. Strength and cardio were important to Hoover before they were in most high school football programs. We were able to win many games against bigger programs because we were in excellent mental and physical shape. Practices were at times a test of human will power that built capacity within us for toughness. Games, even in August, were much easier than practice. I played a couple of years of college football without ever experiencing a practice near the difficulty level of what I did in high school. Hard and difficult practices were the norm. Hoover and his staff always pointed out that easiness is not the path to real and lasting success on the field or in life. I remember one practice in July 1981. It was extremely

hot and we were wrapping up with an unusually difficult conditioning drill that required completing certain stations. One player in particular was having a difficult time and fell significantly behind. We all finished way ahead of him and were eager to go home. Hoover was encouraging him, "Don't give up you can do this." This player was not an impact player, but he was a Hoover's boy and that meant our brother. Soon the whole team was running beside him encouraging him not to give up. We ran with him while he struggled and did not abandon him. When he finally finished we celebrated his finishing the drill despite the heat and pain. He did not quit! That player never scored a touchdown but that moment was as important to Hoover and his coaches as if he had scored the winning touchdown of a district game. As we took a knee I still remember Hoover saying, "Boy's, I believe you now understand what it takes to be a winner on and off the field." That experience typified what being an Engineer football player was all about under the direction of coach Hoover Niece. He and his assistance made us winners on the gridiron and more importantly helped prepare us for the struggles of life. Together, we celebrated, laughed, worked hard, and sometimes cried. Always together – never bickering and arguing!

As I write this letter, I find myself 30 years into a teaching, coaching, and administrative career in public education. During that time, I had the privilege of serving as an assistant coach under Hoover Niece as well. The years of playing for Hoover and serving as an assistant coach under him taught me compassion, empathy, determination, dedication, and persistence. These experiences served to further prepare me for increased levels of responsibility. I currently serve as Principal of Estill county High School and Pastor of Williams Memorial Baptist Church in Ravenna, Kentucky. In many ways, these positions require the same characteristics I learned under Hoover Niece. I was able to see them in action and not as mere words or clichés. They have become a basic part of my leadership beliefs and they are a source of strength for me to this day, and will be forever.

Hoover's impact on students, athletes, and our community goes beyond wins and losses. His legacy has continued among colleagues in the coaching profession who, over the years, have endeavored to pick his brain to find out some strategies he employed. What they discovered was a genuine man with a simple philosophy, wrapped around a huge heart of compassion, tempered with toughness. Success to him was not about having the better schemes on offense or defense but in the way you view life and treat people. In many ways, he lives as he coached, with grit, compassion, determination and persistence. As players, he always treated us as one of his own, and for that reason, we gave him our best!

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If I can be of further assistance, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Chris Winkler – Principal Estill County High School
606-723-3537

Chris Winkler

Tony A. Sergent
Superintendent

Will Smith
Chairperson

Melinda Boggs
Vice-Chairperson

LETCHER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

224 PARKS STREET
WHITESBURG, KENTUCKY 41858
PHONE 606-633-4455
FAX 606-633-4724

Robert Kiser
Member

Lena Parsons
Member

Shawn Gilley
Member

March 6, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with great pleasure that I recommend Hoover Niece for the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. I have known Mr. Niece all of my life and his coaching record speaks for itself. What you may not know is that his compassion and love for the athletes he worked with was unprecedented. He not only coached them on the field, but off. He strived to have a winning program and produce young men that become productive members of their school and community.

Mr. Niece went out of his way to ensure that all of his players were supported and cared for. It was not uncommon for him to have four to five students, who came from difficult home lives, to be living with him. He supported them emotionally and financially; not an easy task while raising three children of his own. His compassion for his athletes goes above and beyond that of other coaches. The time, money, and dedication to his athletes and the love of the game make him a perfect candidate for the Hall of Fame.

Mr. Niece touched the lives of countless young athletes in his years of coaching, providing for and caring about each of them as athletes and people. His character and compassion is not easily imitated or taught. His natural ability and contributions to high school athletics deserves to be recognized.

This is my thirtieth year in education and I was involved in coaching during most of that time. In all those years, I have never seen another coach give so much to ensure the well-being of their athletes. It is without reservation, that I recommend Hoover Niece to be inducted into the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. Please feel free to contact me with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Tony Sergent
Superintendent,
Letcher County Public Schools

BELFRY HIGH SCHOOL



A COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL

27678 U.S. Highway N. 119

Belfry, Kentucky 41514

606-237-3900

Fax: 606-237-5119



Mark Gannon
Principal

Mark Thompaon
Assistant Principal

Matt Varney
Assistant Principal

Candy Taylor
Secretary



Philip Haywood
Guidance Counselor

Ruth-Marie Pauley
Guidance Counselor

Sandy Brown
Media Specialist

Pat May
YRC Coordinator

1/26/18

KHSAA Hall of Fame Committee:

I am writing in reference to Hoover Neace, former football coach at Estill County High School. I have known Hoover for many years. We began competing against each other in the early eighties. We didn't play often, but when we did his teams were always well coached, rugged, but played clean. You learn a lot by listening to others. His peers held him in high regard, as do I. Hoover understood that coaching is more than just winning games as he encouraged his players academically, as well as athletically. He developed good relationships in the community and was held in high esteem. This is evident as seen by his 27 years of longevity at the same school.

Hoover is certainly worthy of induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame for his lifetime of service to the youth and community of Estill County. I highly recommend him.

Philip Haywood
Head Football Coach/Athletic Director
Belfry High School

FEBUARY 21, 2018

MIKE JONES

HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

2675 WINCHESTER RD

IRVINE , KY 40336

606-975-6382

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

IT IS OFTEN SAID THAT A GOOD COACH TAKES YOU PLACES WHERE YOU CANT TAKE YOURSELF, A GOOD COACH WILL IMPACT MORE PEOPLE IN A YEAR THAT OTHERS WILL IN A LIFETIME. THAT BEING SAID, I FEEL THAT HOOVER NIECE FITS INTO THIS CATEGORY.

HOOVER COACHED ESTILL COUNTY FOOTBALL FOR OVER THREE DECADES, BATTLING DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES AS MUNDANE AS HAVING A PLACE TO PRACTICE. THROUGH IT ALL HE CONSISTENTLY BUILT HARD NOSED , WELL CONDITIONED FOOTBALL TEAMS AND BUILT A TRADITION THAT WILL LIVE FOREVER. THE THINGS THAT HE TAUGHT TO HIS PLAYERS WILL LIVE FOREVER IN THEIR HEARTS.

HOOVER IMPACTED ME AS A COACH WHILE I PLAYED FOR HIM, BUT HE IMPACTED ME MORE DURING COLLEGE AND PROBABLY SAVE MY BROTHER WHO LIVED WITH HIM THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL, HE DID THIS FOR LOTS OF PLAYERS, SHAWN JONES, BUDDY ARVIN AND DAVID HARPER. AS WELL AS RAISING THREE OUTSTANDING YOUNG MEN WHO PLAYED FOR HIM AND WENT ON AND PLAYED COLLEGE FOOTBALL. ONE YEAR I WAS LIVING IN A CAMPER , WORKING AND TRAINING FOR COLLEGE FOOTBALL AT UNION COLLEGE, WHILE I WAS NAPPING IN 100 DEGREE HEAT, I HEARD A KNOCK AT THE CAMPER DOOR, IT WAS HOOVER NIECE, AND HE SAID GET YOUR STUFF, LET'S GO! I WOULD NOT BE WHERE I AM AT TODAY IF NOT FOR THIS GREAT MAN.

I FEEL IT WOULD BE A TRAJEDY NOT TO ELECT HOOVER NIECE INTO THE KHSAA HALL OF FAME, HE HAS IMPACTED MORE LIVES THAN MANY DO IN A LIFETIME, HOOVER STILLS SUPPORTS ESTILL COUNTY FOOTBALL IN MANY WAYS, BUT I FEEL ITS IS SAFE TO SAY , HE IS ESTILL COUNTY FOOTBALL!

COACH MIKE JONES

ESTILL COUNTY FOOTBALL



Perry County Central High School



School:
606-439-5888

***305 Park Ave.
Hazard, KY 41701***

Fax:
606-439-2825

ADMINISTRATION

Principal: Michelle Ritchie
Assistant Principal: Kevin Campbell

**KHSAA
2280 Executive Dr
Lexington, KY 40505**

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to write this letter to recommend Hoover Neace, a retired football coach at Estill Co. High School, be considered for KHSAA Hall Of Fame Honors.

My name is Tom Larkey, a high school football coach for 46 years and a friend to Hoover Neace for the past 30 years. I have always had much respect for the outstanding job he has done and for the time he has put into high school football. We have been competitive on the field and still remained friends all these years.

Hoover made a small rural school competitive for several years and he has had a huge impact on the lives of many young men.

Without reservation, I recommend Hoover Neace to be inducted into the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,

**Tom Larkey
Head Football Coach
Perry Co Central High School**

Bell County Board of Education

Doug Ramsey, Chairman
Eulene Brock, Vice-Chairperson
Dean Knuckles

Yvonne W. Gilliam, Superintendent
PO Box 340, 211 W. Virginia Avenue, Pineville, KY 40977
(606) 337-7051 Fax (606) 337-1412
<http://www.bell.kyschools.us>

Larry Elliott
Wayne Mason

April 12, 2018

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing this letter of recommendation for Coach Hoover Neace to be inducted into the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall (KHSAA) of Fame.

I have known Coach Neace for 35 years. He has always been very dedicated to football coaching, very knowledgeable of the game of football, and a great disciplinarian with his team members. Coach Neace has always been an excellent role model for the young men whose lives he has touched.

Coach Neace worked in a school that did not have a great deal of talent, yet he always managed to produce competitive teams. I am certain that he had to work very hard to develop his program. Hoover has always been the backbone of the Estill County Football. Estill County chose to name their football field after him. This was a very deserving honor for Coach Neace. Without his hard work and dedication to his school and community, this would have never happened.

Again, I would like to advocate his induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame and consider it an honor to recommend him for this accolade.

Sincerely



Coach Dudley Hilton



Boyle County High School

1637 Perryville Road • Danville, Kentucky 40422-9775
(859) 236-5047

To Whom It May Concern:

I am privileged and honored to write this letter on behalf of Hoover Niece as he was one of the best high school football coaches that I have ever coached against.

Hoover and I coached against each other on several different occasions while he was the head football coach at Estill County and I was the head football coach of Boyle County. His teams were always ultra-prepared, extremely physical, and very disciplined. When you played Estill County under Hoover's watch you had to be at your best.

I met with Hoover at various football clinics during the off season as Hoover was always studying the game and on many occasions we shared ideas about football philosophy and techniques. He was innovative and well ahead of his time with his ideas and strategies.

In summary, Hoover Niece possessed the character, leadership, and knowledge that all great coaches possess, he positively changed many young lives with his, guidance, personality and charisma. It was an honor to be on the opposite sideline of such a great person and coach.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

**Chuck Smith
Head Football Coach
Boyle County High School**

I would like to respectfully request the KHSAA to consider Hoover Niece, my father, for the KHSAA Hall of Fame. My father was head coach for two 12 year runs at Estill County High School. Dad comes from Whitesburg, Kentucky where he was an all conference athlete in basketball and football. In basketball he played for Gobel Ritter who is a member of the ECU hall of fame. In football, he played or coach Ghose.

Many times my father would have to walk 14 miles out of Cane Holler in Colson to and from practice just so he could play. When the coaches eventually heard of this they started providing my father with a ride. I believe all of this is where my father learned dedication, discipline, integrity and many of life's important characteristics, including but not limited to how to be a head coach, build relationships, being a mentor and developing the family that was Estill County Football when he coached.

My father is the only coach who ever had above a 500 win percentage while developing that 24 year family that last to this day. We may not have won State Championships but what we learned and did win was love for each other and what being a family is about. How to care for each other, rely on each other, love each other as brothers. These are only a few traits that continue to this day with those of us who played for my father.

I can remember teams from the time I was four years old and those players look to the younger one's of us as the same brothers they are. It's something special and unless you have experienced it, you can't understand. My father always provided a place to sleep and food for the players who didn't have a place to go at night. I'm the oldest of my parents three children however I was not the oldest son in the house until my senior year because there were kids who didn't have a home. That's the type of man and coach my father was and is and it continues to this day.

My father coached four first team all step football players, of those four one was a Mr Football finalist and played on the Kentucky All-Star Team. Two of those mentioned went on to sign with colleges with full scholarships. There are many more second and third team all state players as well as those who made honorable mention.

The greatest thing I have been given was a mentor who is like my father and grew up with my best friend who was his son. To this day I can depend on my coaches for any guidance I may need for they have distilled the quality in us to never quit, regardless how bad anything gets, we must fight through it. Coaches this day and time are not like that. To me they want to be the next great development offense or defense coach. I thank GOD every day I got to play for this family! They have given me more than any Championships can give.

For the reasons I've mentioned I respectfully ask for your considerations.

Regards,

Jeremy Niece

William J. Beard
Student Teacher Supervisor/ Teacher Educator
320 Suncrest Cove
Irvine, Kentucky 40336

April 2, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter of recommendation is written for Hoover Niece.

I had the great pleasure of being the athletic director at the Estill County High School during the 1978-79, and again during the 1984-88 school years. During this time I met Hoover Niece, and worked along beside him to promote, and enhance the Estill County football program. It didn't take long for me to develop an appreciation for, and admire the job he did with those young men. It wasn't a football team but a family of football players! The players spent countless hours at the Niece home as he was the father figure that many didn't have. He was such a wonderful mentor and role model to them. Because of their love and admiration for him they would play their hearts out and in turn created a winning tradition. I would have to make call after call each year to find teams who were willing to play us. This resulted in us busing the team great distances to be able to have a game on Friday night.

Many times I find coaches do not make the best teachers, but this was not the case with Hoover. During observations I found him to be an outstanding teacher as well! Students enjoyed, and looked forward to his class, and they always performed well on end of the year assessments. I also became a personal friend of the family. In fact, his wife Sharon taught for me in later years and I was a visitor to the Niece home on several occasions. I can say without a doubt, Hoover was an exceptional father and husband.

Taking all this into consideration, I whole heartedly feel Hoover Niece is a very deserving candidate for the Kentucky High School Football Hall of Fame.

Respectfully,

William J. Beard

Phone: 606-260-2257

For Hoover Niece:

My name is David Harper.

I met Hoover Niece my freshman year of high school, he was my Health and P.E. teacher.

I didn't realize until I left high school and was out on my own with my own family and career, just how much Coach Niece and the football program would impact and influence my life.

I joined the football team my sophomore year. A tough winter weight program, grueling two-a-day practices in the hot summer, and games on Friday nights led us at the end of the season to be sub-district champions. I wasn't a starter or major player that year, but a part of the team. This was a special thing that I had to be a part of.

Coach Niece is who made this football program special. He got to know his players by knowing them personally and their family situations. He knew which ones to push hard and which ones who just needed a pat on the back to apply themselves off and on the football field. Like many people in Kentucky, my family was torn apart by the pressures of poverty and the use of alcohol and drugs. As a young man of 15 years old, I found myself without a stable home. With choices to make at that age, I didn't know what to do or have anywhere to go. I truly believe an angel of God found me and sent me to Coach Niece when he and his family took me in to live with them for 2 years.

I was not the only player he took in. He did that for others, but with sometimes different situations. He always treated us like his own sons with the same expectations, discipline, and love.

As football players, he taught us to work hard, give 110 percent on the football field and if we did that, we didn't have to worry about what the scoreboard said after the game was over, we were still "winners." I have carried that work ethic and sense of pride Coach Niece instilled in me throughout my life.

I then went on to graduate from high school, served my country as a Marine for 4 years, I have held the same job for 27 years and counting, and raised three wonderful kids with my wife of over 30 years.

I thank Coach Niece for that opportunity 38 years ago and what he taught me then. Teaching me to be a "winner!"

Billy Wiseman
75 Panarama View
Irvine Ky 40336

March 30, 2018

Dear KHSAA Hall of Fame Committee,

I am pleased to recommend Hoover Niece be inducted into the KHSAA Hall Of Fame as a Head Football Coach. I have known Hoover since I was 6 years old. I was the kid that was at practice everyday since he became the Head Coach at Estill County High School and never missed a game that he coached until I became the scouting coach for him in 1991. I have witnessed the impact he has had on the many young boys that he has coached and the competitive nature that he instilled in them. I also have seen first hand how he created a program that was respected throughout the state and feared by our competition for the toughness and tenacity his teams played with.

First, I would like to tell you about my time as a young boy witnessing him as a coach. I vividly remember the long tough practices he put his players through (I was the one who would sneak them water). He would constantly remind his players how they had to be physical and mentally tougher, in better shape, smarter and most of all have more heart than their opponents. I was always in the locker room where I witnessed just how much love he had for his players. He seemed to know who needed a hug, pat on the back or even sometimes a swift kick in the butt. It was there that I realized that he was training them for more than a football game. He made them understand that this was leading to the game of life. He took boys and made them young men. When Friday nights came, it was then I could see that the players realized his practices had made them ready for the battle and upon graduation they were ready for the real world.

Second, I would like to reflect upon my playing days. I was a member of the football team from 1980-1983 seasons. I always thought I knew Hoover and how he would coach my teammates and I. Some things were what I had seen for many years but there was so much more that I learned. The amount of time he put into the football program was mind blowing to me. We did things that I did not see as a kid. We worked hard to get stronger in the offseason, to become smarter players and most of all to never quit (We won many games that we were trailing in the fourth quarter). We watched film to become more ready for our opponents. Most of all, we spent a lot of time together becoming a family. He always taught us to put God first, Family second and Football third. By doing so we would be successful. The last thing that I would want you to know about Hoover and my playing days is what I learned and still use to this day. A Coach's job at practice and on the field is to teach and put their players in a position to make the play. I could still play my position today because of his teaching.

Third, I now would like to talk about my days as an assistant coach under Hoover. I coached with Hoover all through the 1990's for around 10 years. Again, I thought that I knew Hoover better than most people but again I was wrong. During this time I really found out just how much he knows about the game of football, how much he really loved his players, how much effort he spent making it possible for young boys to play and how money was never an obstacle. My first day of practice as a coach, I was informed by him that I would be coaching the linemen. I had never played on the line in my life. He quickly instructed me that if I was to become a good coach I had to know what happens between the tackles. It did not take me long to realize he was right. What a lot of people do not know is the time spent he spent teaching the game. When we were at camp during the preseason, you would not believe the hours he spent teaching other teams coaches about the game. They all had a saying that they were going to "milk him dry". These were coaches whom had won state championships but loved sitting at his feet learning more about the game. While coaching I witnessed the way he knew and loved his players by the time he took with them. I saw him pick kids up for practice and take them home (probably adding another 2 hours to his day) just so they were able to play. He also made sure his players graduated even if he or his wife went and picked them up and made them go to school. I think one of his greatest accomplishments is that he made sure that kids did not have to pay for anything. His coaching office was not elaborate, his locker rooms were what you needed and he operated on what money was given by the school for extras.

Lastly, personally Hoover Niece is already a Hall of Famer to me. I am a better person due to the time spent with him. I have coached Football, Basketball, Baseball and Softball for many different ages. My teams were always successful mainly due to the lessons that I learned from Hoover about preparation, hard work, love for each other and performing because they were put in a position to "make the play". There is so many things that I learned from watching him throughout the years, but most of all is FAMILY. Once an Engineer ALWAYS an Engineer.

I do believe Hoover Niece is very worthy of this honor because of the success he has had in building a respected football program. But, we all know coaching is much more than x's and o's.

Thanks for your Consideration

Billy Wiseman



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FAX (859)

• 2 5 9 - 0 9 3 8 •

P.O. BOX

• 2 1 2 0 •

LEXINGTON

KENTUCKY

40588-2120

Andar Niece
Sales Representative
Clay Ingels, LLC
March 2, 2018

To Whom it may concern:

I'm writing to recommend that Hoover Niece be inducted into the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Football Coaches Hall of Fame. I've played and coached a lot of sports over the years and he's one of the best coaches I've been around. He had an ability to really motivate young men and have a positive influence on their lives. I'm not really sure how many wins and losses he had on the field, but he sure has had a lot of wins molding young men into really productive citizens over the years. He taught us a lot about life through the game of football. He always preached Faith, Family, Football, and to prioritize them in that order. He taught us to be winners. He said, "The way you win is to give it everything you got, every single play. If you did that, you were a winner no matter what the scoreboard said."

I'm a little different than most of Coach Niece's players, I'm his middle of three sons. Looking back, one of the most impressive traits he had was being able to separate being a Dad from being a Coach. He treated me just like he treated the rest of the players on the field, and was my Dad when we got home. I really appreciate now his ability to separate the two. It allowed me to have a really positive experience in football while playing for my Dad.

I've used his definition of winning all my life. After Highschool, I attended Union College in Barbourville, Ky and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration while playing football. After undergrad at Union College, I attended Eastern Kentucky University and earned a Master's Degree in Business Administration. I am currently a Sales Representative for Clay Ingels, LLC in Lexington, Ky. I give a lot of credit for the success I've had to the positive influence my Coach/Dad has had on me over the years. I try to win the "Hoover Niece" way every day.

Sincerely,

Andar Niece

Hoover Niece

KHSAA Hall of Fame

My name is Stanley Niece, it has recently been brought to my attention that my father, Hoover Niece, has been nominated to be inducted into the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

My father exemplified what it means to be a father and football coach. He was a teacher and a coach for 30 years at Estill County High School, being a head coach for 27 of those years.

Growing up I noticed that my dad taught his players the same values that he taught my brothers and I. He taught us how to be men. He taught us that on the field and in life that if you give everything that you have, try as hard as you possibly can, you'll be a winner regardless of what the score says. That you can always hold your head up and be proud of what you have accomplished. Football was never about wins and losses to dad. Being in a small town like Irvine, some years you have more talent than others. Over the years he had been offered several coaching jobs at other/larger schools where he would have had better talent and more money, but coaching to him was about the players lives that he was able to make a difference in. I truly believe that he found his purpose in Estill County. He was able to instill values that would get us all through the toughest situations. He taught us honor, integrity, loyalty, respect and to have pride in the things that we did and would do when we left high school. That we need to be there for the people that you care about when they need you and depend on you. He also taught us to believe in ourselves, believe that we could do anything we put our minds to. He would make sure that we were playing some of the best teams in the state for this very reason. Looking back, we played and beat a lot of teams that, as far as the amount of talent, we should have not been able to compete with.

My father also cared for his players like they were his own children. In many small towns in eastern Kentucky like Irvine, life is hard for kids. Many challenges that kids/young adults face are out of their control. Being from Whitesburg, my dad understood this and always made sure that my brothers and I understood this. Whether it be a ride home, something to eat or a place to sleep, my dad was always there for his players and their families. He never left the field before every player had left or had been picked up, if they needed a ride he would get them home. As far back as I can remember players would come to the house at night and eat with us from time to time. As a child, I thought it was great having them over, not realizing the situations that many of them faced at their own home.

Dad is widely respected by his peers. Many coaches around the state would call him for tips on how to run certain defenses. He has been an assistant coach in the Kentucky/Tennessee All Star game, 1995 and 1997. His record as a coach never seemed to matter too much so I honestly don't know it. As a coach and a father, his victories were so much more than what a scoreboard ever said.

With this letter, please consider my father to be inducted into the KHSAA Hall of Fame

Stanley Niece

1/29/2018

To: KHSAA Hall of Fame Committee

From: John Abney

Subj. Letter of Recommendation to HOF for Hoover Niece

Committee,

Coach Niece taught me a lot as I look back on my High School Football days. He was aggressive and worked our butts off. But Coach Niece was like a father figure to his players. We would be absolutely gassed after a practice session.

Coach was a motivator but was also Hard Core. We loved our Coach to where we would hang out at his house on the weekends, and always felt welcome being there. He treated us like his sons. His wife Sharon treated us in the same manner.

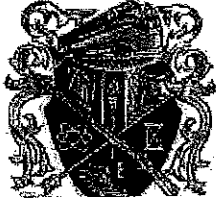
Hoover's boys would do anything for him. He was devoted to his players. Among the many things I took away from my football experience with Hoover I think the most valuable to me now was the discipline from his Coaching style, which has benefited me the most in my working life.

Coach Niece always had our best interests in his heart. Hoover Niece would be an excellent addition to the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Best Regards

John Abney

Former Player and All State Recipient



MICKEY TUCKER
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Buddy Arvin
Assistant Principal
Success Academy Principal

Estill County High School

397 Engineer Road
Irvine, Kentucky 40336

CHRIS WINKLER
PRINCIPAL

JAMIE DAY
GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

JEFF BURCHFIELD
GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter to strongly encourage all involved to consider Hoover Niece for induction into the Kentucky High School Football Hall of Fame.

I must begin by saying that Hoover would be the last to want to receive any award or accolade for the work he has accomplished his entire coaching career. Yet, he deserves to be recognized and celebrated for the lifetime dedicated to the education of young men on the football field. He always treated the game as an education to life.

There has been no other person that I have been associated with who combined the sport with building young men's character more. For 27 years on the football field he dedicated himself to many hundreds of young men's futures by instilling a sense of pride, dedication, and commitment into any endeavour they choose to follow.

I played for Hoover from 1979 to 1983.

That period only tells part of the story. When I was a freshman in High School, Hoover took me into his home for a period of time. He and his wonderful wife Sharon and his three young sons provided me with the support and guidance I needed in moving forward in a positive and constructive manner. I was not the only player that Hoover and Sharon opened up their home to during rough patches. He provided a place for them/me to go when there was no other place to go.

Almost everyday he would go and get or take home players that had no way to and burn practice or games. These boys lived all over the county and he always made sure they had an opportunity to be a part of something that was bigger than themselves. Distances or times were never used as a complaint or excuse.

I will be honest, I don't know what his lifetime win/loss record is. He won more than he lost throughout his career with talent that could rarely compete. But compete all of his teams did!! He had every opportunity to leave Estill County for better talent and more pay, but he chose to stay. I have ask him why, and the answer is always "I Love the Estill County Kids".

Anyone who knows Hoover knows
he was and is a hardnosed son of a bitch
and we love him for it! He was a
builder of men on the football field
and in life. His dedication and
contributions need to be recognized and
celebrated with an induction into
the Kentucky High School Football
Hall of Fame.

Thank you.

Buddy Arvin
Asst. Principal
Estill Co. High

February 2, 2018

**John W. Brown
118 Quail Run
Somerset, KY 42503**

To Whom It May Concern,

It has been brought to my attention that Hoover Darrel Nease is being considered as an inductee for membership to the Kentucky High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame. I consider it a privilege to offer my highest recommendation of Coach Nease.

Hoover and I attended Whitesburg High School together from 1962 to 1966. We both played football together for those years, and became close friends. I consider myself lucky to have had as close a friend as Hoover during our college days. After graduation we found ourselves both coaching high school football in eastern Kentucky. Although our teams never competed against each other we did go to summer camps together. During these summer camps, Coach Nease and I would exchange ideas and philosophies together. He has an exceptional relationship with not only his players but also many players on other teams. His influence on so many young lives will be carried on for decades. You could not induct a better man in you Hall of Fame!

Sincerely,

John W. Brown

KHSAA Hall of Fame Committee

2280 Executive Dr.

Lexington, Ky. 40505

Dear Committee,

I would like to recommend Mr. Hoover Niece for induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame. I can truly say without any equivocation whatsoever that Coach Niece is as deserving as any of those currently in the Hall of Fame. His influence on young peoples lives and his successes on the field speak volumes in recognizing him for this honor. I remember a time when Coach Niece and Kentucky High School Football were synonymous with one another. He would make a great addition to the Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,

Sam Harp



285 Carhartt Ave.

P.O. Box 88

Irvine, Kentucky

40336

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Hoover Niece Hall of Fame Recommendation

I am writing to you today to formally recommend that Coach Hoover Niece be considered for induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame. I appreciate you taking the time to read this letter and thank you in advance.

As a former player for Coach Niece at Estill County, I know firsthand what this man has meant to his players, school, and family. That family extends beyond his own biological family, and to a group of us lucky enough to call him Coach.

It would be easy for me to tell you stories about my playing time under Coach. Instead, it is easier to talk about his impact on me today. You see, there is not a day that goes by that I am reminded of what Coach taught us. I can recall every discussion as a team with simple reminders to work together, and that the game of football was going to be easy compared to the time when we would become fathers, husbands, and employees. It sounded so far off at the time, and now it is those thoughts I treasure most.

While I am sure many coaches worked to get the most out of their players, Coach Niece had to do that AND get the most out of his equipment, practice fields; all while starting up a program. That work ethic carried onto the field. Coach told us we were never going to be the biggest, or the fastest, but we would certainly play the hardest and be a team that loved one another. That was the epitome of what Coach stands for.

Today, both playing hard, and playing for one another, are the principles I try to display in the business world. Coach always told us how important each position was to achieve success. Now, more than ever, I realize just how wise he was with those words. Simply put, the values of my parents, combined with the teachings of Coach Niece molded me into the person I have become. Success in sports and life are sometimes fleeting... influence on others is not. It was a gift I received from Coach Niece that stands the test of time. A gift of working hard and responsibility for my actions are owed to Coach.

Please feel free to contact me if you should have any additional questions. I appreciate that there are many applicants and hope that you seriously consider my recommendation of Hoover Niece.

Respectfully Submitted,

William P. Hardy

Senior Vice-President of Supply Chain -- Carhartt Inc.

Former Quarterback -- Estill County Engineers



Kevin T. Williams

Estill County Judge Executive

130 Main Street Room 101

Irvine, KY 40336

Phone: 606-723-7524

Fax: 606-723-5471

E-mail: kevinw@estillcounty.net

KSHAA Hall of Fame Committee

My name is Kevin T. Williams, an alumnus of Estill County High School, class of 1982. I played football for head coach, Hoover Niece. He instilled in his coaches, teams, and students a discipline, leadership, values, respect and pride for the school. He was a coach, a father-figure, and a counselor. He lead with gentleness, but had sternness and a motivation to better each of us as a student athlete. He wrapped a strong arm around all his team and staff, year round. He always let us know he was there for us, no matter what the situation. He was a positive influence for his players then, as he still is today.

My relationship with Hoover Niece is everlasting, the memories never fade, and the lessons learned are both countless and priceless. He always said, "Play each play. Learn from your mistakes, and you will be stronger."

I sit here today in Estill County, newly appointed by Governor Bevin as County Judge Executive because I believe in discipline, hard work, dedication and community, remembering those messages of the past. I strongly believe that the strong family in which I was raised, and a head football coach and staff who lead by example helped make me become the person I am today.

In closing, I find comfort in knowing that Hoover and his loving wife, Sharon, are just a phone call away from me and each member of his teams. Coaches and good people deserve to be honored and recognized. My hope is to see Hoover Niece in the KSHAA Hall of Fame, not only as a coach, but as a great mentor as well.

Respectfully,

Kevin T. Williams
Estill County Judge Executive
Class of 1982 (#24)

IRVINE MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

238 Broadway
Irvine, KY 40336
606-723-2197

To whom it may concern,

Hoover Niece is not just a High School Hall of Fame coach me contender. He is a legend. A legend to previous, current, and future players of Estill County football. He was the originator of what Estill County football is all about.

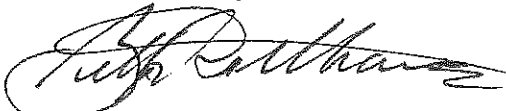
I am the manager of a water/sewer utility, where I wear many hats and face different challenges daily. I have served my country. Because of three a day football practices in July and August, basic training was like 4H camp. I graduated at the top 20% of my class and went on to become a Drill Sergeant. I have served my community as both an elected official, and volunteer. I have helped coach many youth league and middle school football teams with success. I served and am serving on various boards in my area and am involved in many organizations where I have served as president/CEO or just an active member.

I am certain, if not for his inspiration and leadership, I would not have begun to accomplish what I have achieved in my adult life. Coach Niece was a tough, old school, "smash mouth football" kind of coach. He often said, "it's just a bruise" or "that's too far from your heart to kill ya, now get up!" He often used "tough love", but today's world needs "thicker skinned" individuals! His love for his players and the game was always evident. He accentuated determination to win, but not at the cost of good sportsmanship.

Coach Niece taught us to always be early, be prepared, and give our best effort in everything we do. He taught us integrity, to do your best even when his back was turned, and we did, out of respect\love for him. No player wanted to let Coach down. We knew he truly cared for us. We were more than a team we were family!

Coach Niece deserves recognition as an inductee to the High School Hall of Fame for being a leader, mentor, and father figure to student athletes. Many of those young men would not have graduated high school or had positive contributions to society if not for him. His above and beyond commitment to the Engineer football player changed boys to men. *He knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way!*

Thank you for your time and Go 'Neers!



Billy F. "Bee" Williams II
Operational Manager
Irvine Municipal Utilities

To whom it may concern,

In regards to Aaron Niece being considered for the Kentucky High School Hall of Fame, I do hope that your that your considerations go further than the football field.

I can say, without hesitation, that what I learned from Coach Niece has taken me much further in life than the games I played.

In my life, like most, I have faced situations in which I have wanted to take the easy way out. After all who would know, who would care. Coach Niece taught me that if you are going to do something, great or small, do it with integrity, perseverance, hard work, and above all never quit. Don't think that is taught much today.

I was not one of Coach Niece's best players, I did not play on one of his best teams. I was just a wandering teenage who needed some direction. Found it in Coach Niece.

I do not know where my life would
be today without Coach Hice.

What I do know is that my life
has been made better by the time we
had together. I am a better Christian,
Subsband, Father, Son, Brother, Friend,
etc. because of Coach Hice.

I don't know what qualifies a person
for the Hall of Fame, I do hope it
requires much more than wins and losses
Football is much more than that.

Beate Hise
Ester L. Football
Class of 1973