

Remembering BB King, the 'King of Mountain Basketball'

[Courtney Layne Brewer](#)

HINDMAN, Ky. (WYMT) - BB King's impact on mountain basketball will be felt for years to come by those who were touched by him.

Most basketball coaches and players in the 14th Region know the story of BB King and how a kid from Hindman had a hand in ten regional titles.

"He was a competitor," said current Leslie County head coach and former Breathitt County head coach John Noble. "He wanted to win, he wanted to beat you, but at the same time you could call him up and say 'hey coach, what do you think about this, what do you think about that?' and he'd give you his best opinion."

King won region titles in 1979 and 1980 as a player at Knott Central and still holds the third-all-time scoring record for the Patriots.

He returned to Hindman in 2010 to coach the team that established him in the region, winning the district title in his first season. He went on to win seven 53rd District titles and five 14th Region titles as head coach of the Patriots.

King's 2015 team was one of the most successful in school history, finishing the season 30-3 and falling in the first round of the Sweet Sixteen in overtime. From that group, Camron Justice was named 2015 Kentucky Mr. Basketball, going on to play college ball and finishing his career at Western Kentucky.

"He was the head of the snake in that whole run," said Justice. "He kinda kept us together, kept us grounded, but more importantly, everybody always wants to talk about basketball with him. With us, with that group, there was so much more to it and it was so genuine. It was more of like a family atmosphere. A brotherhood."

Coach King spent 12 seasons as the head coach at Knott Central. He was named head coach at Breathitt County prior to the 2022-23 season and coached his final game in the third-place game of the 36th Annual WYMT Food City Mountain Basketball Classic.

BB King is survived not only by his family but by countless former coaches, players and community members who were impacted by The King.

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