

October 20, 2018

Dear KHSAA Hall of Fame Selection Committee:

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for Zeb Blankenship in support of his KHSAA Hall of Fame candidacy.

Zeb was an outstanding high school athlete, leading his Cumberland High School (Elkhorn City) team to three regional championships and state tournament appearances in 1943, 1944 and 1945. He was named to the All-State team in his senior year of 1945. He played his freshman year of college at the University of Kentucky before being drafted into the military and serving our country in the United States Army.

While Zeb's stellar basketball career is alone worthy of Hall of Fame induction, his high school coaching and administrative careers are maybe even more impressive and impactful. His basketball coaching career spanned over ten years as the head coach in four different high school settings and communities. At each stop, he developed winning programs and, more importantly, imparted meaningful life lessons to his players and students. He also coached baseball and football during these years.

His administrative career began in 1962 and stretched through 1981. He served as high school principal at both Mercer County High School (five years) and at Jessamine County High School (14 years). During this time he served as a valued member of the KHSAA Board of Control and as its President for three years. This service is just one example of Zeb's desire to promote high school athletics.

In his capacity as a high school coach and principal, Zeb positively influenced countless youth in our state. His players, as well as his pupils, continue to credit him for the difference he made in their lives. Zeb's legacy continues to this day through the accomplishments of so many who he mentored, and will continue to have impact on future generations. He planted a seed for so many young people by motivating and encouraging them to challenge themselves and to succeed in life.

It is with great pleasure that I write to recommend Zeb Blankenship for induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Mills".

Tom Mills

Former KHSAA Commissioner

Take a Note!

9-22-18

MR. EVERETTE VARNER

IT is my pleasure and Honor to Recommend my DEAR FRIEND ZEB BLAKESHIP TO BE inducted into the KHSAA HALL of fame.



I served WITH ZEB ON THE KHSAA BOARD 3 years. We were Room Mates ONE year AT OUR NATIONAL Board meeting. He ALWAYS served Very Professionally, AND WANTED TO DO what WAS RIGHT for THE BOYS AND girls in KENTUCKY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS.

AS A HIGH SCHOOL PLAYER, He played ON some GREAT TEAMS AT ELKHORN City THAT PLAYED in THE STATE TOURNAMENT in 1943 - RECORD 35-9, 1944 - RECORD 36-3, 1945 RECORD 37-9. He WAS 3rd TEAM ALLSTATE in 1944, AND 2nd TEAM ALLSTATE in 1945.

(OVER)

2

-2-
Take a Note!

3 yr. STATE TOURNAMENT
RECORD 108-21 - WOW!



His RECORD AS A PLAYER,
COACH, ADMINISTRATOR, AND BOARD
OF CONTROL - KHSAA - MEMBER
CERTAINLY MAKES HIM A DESERVING
HALL OF FAME MEMBER.

He and His wife were the two
people I looked for EACH YEAR
AT THE KHSAA STATE TOURNAMENT.

MR. VARNLEY WHATEVER you can do,
TO HELP GET ZEB INDUCTED INTO
THE HALL OF FAME WILL SERVE AS
A REMINDER WHAT A GREAT MAN HE
WAS.

BARRY THWEATT - 971 BIRCH
ST. APT 418 - BENTON, KY 42025
PH - 270-703-2974

City of Georgetown

GEORGETOWN, KENTUCKY

EVERETTE VARNEY, MAYOR

Memo

TO: Kentucky High School Athletic Association

FROM: Everett Varney *E Varney*

DATE: ~~May 19, 2003~~ *Oct. 28, 2018 EV*

RE: ENDORSEMENT FOR ZEB BLANKENSHIP FOR INDUCTION
INTO THE KHSAA "HALL OF FAME"

Zeb Blankenship is one of the most deserving individuals I know of who is not already a member of the KHSAA "Hall of Fame."

Coach Blankenship was my coach at Belfry High School 1953 – '56. Everything I am, and what I have, is the direct result of his advice, leadership, and overall interest in my development and future.

After high school I did not have a scholarship to college nor did I have funding of my own to attend. I ended up in a factory in Cleveland, Ohio with my dreams of college and the continuation of my playing career gone. My dream was to teach and coach and model myself to be just like him. This dream was shattered; I was heartbroken.

One day a letter arrived from Coach Blankenship. He said I could get into Berea College at mid-term if I would apply. He never gave up on me and did get me in school. I applied immediately with renewed hopes of fulfilling my dreams.

After completing high school, I earned my BS, MA and Rank I degrees. This education allowed me to be a teacher, coach and administrator for thirty-three wonderful years. I am now in my second term as Mayor of the City of Georgetown. This wonderful man made all of this possible for me.

I look forward to attending his induction into the KHSAA "Hall of Fame."

ROGER WILLIAMS
404 Bond Street
Richmond, Kentucky 40475

May 12, 2003

Mrs. Pat Nielsen
421 Malabu Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40502

Dear Mrs. Nielsen:

I am in receipt of your letter regarding Zeb Blankenship's nomination to the *Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame* and will be pleased to add my endorsement.

Zeb and I have known each other for over thirty years. Due to our not always being in close proximity, we have not remained in close touch, but I have always held Zeb in high regard.

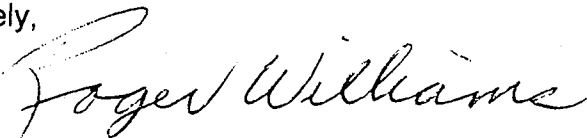
Over the years, I have known Zeb as a family man, basketball official, coach and administrator.

As a coach, Zeb's character and bench decorum were always excellent. He was a good person to be associated with.

I have never known Zeb not to be fair and true in what he did. He always seemed to have one of the best relationships with his players. Even when Zeb had mediocre players, he managed to get "top-notch" performances from them.

I heartily endorse Zeb Blankenship's nomination for the *Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger Williams". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Roger Williams

RW/jy

I am honored to participate in the nomination of Zeb Blankenship to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

I have known Zeb Blankenship all his life, as did my late husband Leslie Anderson. Zeb was born in Elkhorn City, Kentucky at the home of his grandparents, Dr. John Tilden and Lilly Deskins. His mother Beulah was married to Zeb Sr., who was a railroader. Beulah was never well or strong due to having contracted diphtheria as a young girl. His father died when Zeb was only two years of age so he and his mother continued to live with Dr. and Mrs. Deskins. His mother died when Zeb was 12 years old. Fortunately for Zeb there were three uncles in the home and they helped in shaping Zeb's feelings of a total family especially his uncle Tilden Deskins helped form his interest in athletics and education. Both were well known for their basketball abilities as players and coaches. Both went on to high positions in their career as school administrators.

Leslie and I owned and operated a Drug Store as it was first called but since we sold patented medicines, later changed to Cumberland Confectionary. Cumberland was also the name of the school. Our business was on Main Street, which was the "only street". All businesses were located on this street. The Depot at the end of the street by railroad shipping address Elkhorn City. Other businesses, a restaurant, hotdog and hamburger joint, Dr. Deskins' and Dr. Newsome's offices, wholesale grocery, general store, barber shop, and theater. Our "drug store" was the gathering place for young and old with jukebox, pinball machine, fountain, etc. After the ball games crowds would come to play over the "games". The depot was Elkhorn City, post office was Praise, and school was Cumberland, Kentucky. Around 1950 the Lion's Club had changed the post office and school name to Elkhorn City.

Zeb was an exceptional basketball player, as well as a model boy and student. Leslie attended the games at home and away also a crowd followed them. I remember every person in town and from the creeks and hollows followed them, even though this was hard to do back then because of the roads, etc. Leslie although not having been out of school too long himself was a father figure to many of them. He would go to scrimmage with them during holiday breaks in order to give them somebody to shoot and defend against. They would clean the gym and stoke the school furnace in order to get into the gym and have a basketball shoot around.

The boys traveled in milk wagon trucks, cars that were unsafe, gasoline shortages, coupons etc; they were allowed 25 cents for food after a game. Fans helped some too. Fans at home would listen by radio or next day's newspapers. They had only one uniform; had to furnish other gear themselves, some could not buy, Leslie helped them with this.

Zeb and others were on the all tournament teams who won the district 15th regional tournament on the road to state tournament three years in a row. He was named to all tournament team 43, 44, and 45. He entered the University of Kentucky when Adolph Rupp offered him a scholarship to play ball fall of 1945. He was drafted March of 1946 by U.S. Army. His teammates were those who went on to become the "fabulous five". He did play in the military and later at Pikeville College, he returned to the University of Kentucky and earned a graduate degree.

The 50th year anniversary was approaching; players, coaches, cheerleaders, were contacted and the first "gathering" of the 1943, 44 and 45 Cougars were called and many attended the first time on Alumni weekend, Easter 1992. There was a very good attendance and it has continued on Good Friday each year at the Breaks Lodge. Many teammates, coaches, good fans and friends have gone on to that "Big basketball game in the sky". This year we had 25 in attendance including fans. The Elkhorn City Alumni Association will also continue to meet Saturday before Easter although we have lost the high school, Zeb and his good faithful wife Neldora have kept it going and attended every time except a year of Zeb's illness kept them away.

In August 2002 our beloved Cumberland/Elkhorn City High School became East Ridge High School after consolidating with Feds Creek and Millard High Schools, no longer in Elkhorn City. The trophies and other sports memorabilia are hanging on display and trophies encased at the Elkhorn City Middle School Building. Zeb and other Elkhorn City/Cumberland Cougars will be there for generations to see what has been accomplished. These ball players, Zeb and others have been recognized for their outstanding contributions in athletics for Elkhorn City High School Athletic Hall of Fame Charter Inductees January 2, 1993 for years 43, 44, 45. I am also proud to say that Leslie Anderson was charter inductee for 1933-35, as were many others.

Neldora moved to Elkhorn City in March of 1946 after Zeb had graduated and was playing ball at the University of Kentucky. She regrets that she never saw him play a high school game. She has worked for years for the state of Kentucky traveling over Eastern and Central Kentucky. When people heard her name "Blankenship," they would reminisce about a "left-handed great basketball player from Elkhorn City, she would proudly acknowledge as her husband. They would then tell her great stories about Zeb's basketball talents.

Again I recommend Zeb Blankenship be added to Kentucky High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

Mrs. Leslie (Mary B) Anderson

Mary B. Anderson

BENNETT JOHNSON
P.O. BOX 771
ELKHORN CITY, KY 41522

May 5, 2003

Kentucky High School Athletic Association

To Whom It May Concern:

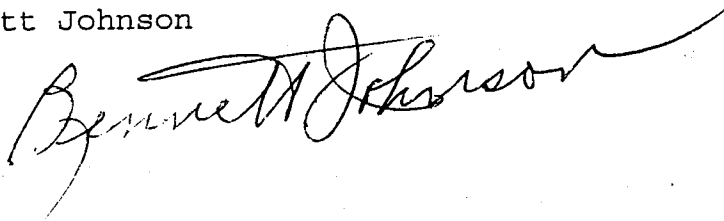
It is a great pleasure to write a letter of recommendation for Zeb Blankenship to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

I participated with Zeb on the Cumberland High School (also known as Elkhorn City High School) Cougar basketball team. He was an exceptional basketball player who played in regional and state tournaments. He is a good Christian, moral man. His talent as a player, coach, high school principal, athletic director, and service in the Kentucky High School Athletic Association exemplify his worthiness of this recognition.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Bennett Johnson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bennett Johnson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name.

April 28, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:


I have known Zeb Blankenship since November 7, 1943. We were teammates during the '43-'44, '44-'45 seasons. Prior to those years I was an admirer of his artistry as an opposing player on a rival team. The change of venue only enhanced my admiration for Zeb, giving me the opportunity to observe his talents daily.

I cannot recall a specific game that would engender a memorable moment; Zeb played every game, every minute with an absolute focus and intensity. Never demeaning to less able teammates, he was the consummate leader. Zeb's desire and deft left hand enabled Elkhorn City to make three consecutive State Tournaments out of a regged Region 15.

Zeb's career at U.K. was aborted by induction into the military, where he served honorably and subsequently completed his education. Zeb remained close to the game via coaching, teaching and finally concluding his career in administration. However, retirement would not be definitive, Zeb continues to lend his acumen to civic needs.

Concluding, I cannot conceive of a more deserving individual for induction into KHSA Hall of Fame than Zeb Blankenship. Dedication and service to KHSA, exemplary leadership, talent with humility and perhaps most important, an extraordinarily moral human being. A hero in 1943, the luster has not diminished in 2003.

Sincerely,



Roy G. Mullins
13902 Oakwood Ln.
Sugar Land TX 77478
(281) 494-5773

9/23/03

To whom it may concern:

I AM well aware of The Facts written About Zeb Blankenship by Mrs. Nielsen. They speak for themselves.

Zeb and I played on The First Ind. U.S. Ky. High School ALL STARS TO defeat Indiana. He contributed greatly in This game.

We both attended U. of Ky. on A scholarship (basketball) 1946.

IF Zeb had stayed he would have played A lot, but he chose To go To Another school where he could start. Besides he returned To his roots. He served Time in The military before doing The Above.

Every Thing considered, he certainly belongs in The Ky. High School Hall of Fame.

Ralph Beard

FITZPATRICK, OSBORNE, HEABERLIN & STURGILL, P.S.C.

119 EAST COURT STREET
PRESTONSBURG, KENTUCKY 41653
(606) 886-2758
(606) 889-9085 TELEFAX

BARKLEY J. STURGILL, SR.

September 24, 2003

RE: Nomination of Zeb Blankenship to the Kentucky
High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame

To Whom It May Concern:

I submit my wholehearted endorsement of Zeb Blankenship to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

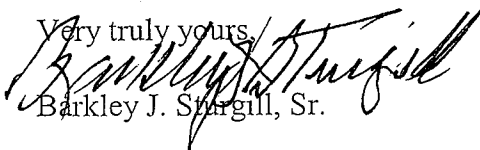
I became acquainted with Zeb Blankenship sixty (60) years ago. He was playing basketball for Elkhorn City High School-I was playing for Prestonsburg High School. We could never beat Elkhorn, but Zeb and I became good friends anyway! He was named All State in 1945. In the fall of 1945, Zeb and I entered the University of Kentucky on basketball scholarships. He would have made the team, I couldn't, because he was drafted into the army in March 1946. Upon returning from military service, Zeb returned to UK where he earned his graduate degrees.

His career as a teacher, coach, and principal is marked by the same success and accomplishment as his career as a high school athlete and his military service.

Zeb has served on the Board of Control and as President of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association, that was marked by outstanding accomplishments.

Zeb Blankenship's record of service to Kentucky interscholastic sports is exceptional and unequalled by any standard. More importantly, Zeb Blankenship has displayed great integrity, inspired leadership and a lifetime of devotion to Kentucky education and in particular, to Kentucky High School athletes -- and after all, isn't that what the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame is all about?

Zeb deserves and I highly recommend him for this honor.

Very truly yours,

Barkley J. Sturgill, Sr.

BJS/jlg

October 22, 2008

Dawahares/KHSAA Hall Of Fame
Attn: Nominations
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, Kentucky, 40505

To Whom It May Concern:

I am honored to recommend for your consideration, Mr. Zeb Blankenship. I have had the opportunity to know and work with Zeb over the past thirty plus years and I feel I know him well both professionally and personally.

Zeb Blankenship's experiences cover the whole spectrum of interscholastic sports as a player, coach, official, school administrator, athletic director and KHSAA President.

Zeb was a member of the Elkhorn City High School basketball team. This team won the 15th Region and played in the Boys State Tournament three consecutive years in the mid-forties. Zeb was named to the 1945 All Tournament Team as a senior.

I have heard Zeb say that he enjoyed his eleven years as a coach and official almost as much as he did as a player. He takes great pride and pleasure in keeping up with his former players.

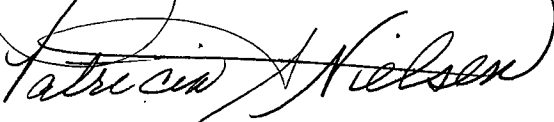
Coach Adolph Rupp offered Zeb a scholarship to play for the University of Kentucky. He entered UK in the Fall of 1945. Fate intervened, however, and Zeb was drafted in to the United States Army in March of 1946. The teammates he entered UK with in 1945 became known as "The Fabulous Five". After playing in the military and at Pikeville College, he returned to UK where he earned two graduate degrees.

Later he found other outlets for his athletic knowledge and leadership. Zeb's background as a High School Principal and Athletic Director made him a good candidate for the KHSAA Board Of Control, where he served on two occasions. He ultimately served as President of KHSAA.

I hope you will agree that Zeb's thirty- plus years in interscholastic sports are exceptional and that he should be considered for the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I believe you will find all the information necessary in the enclosed pages.

Most Sincerely,

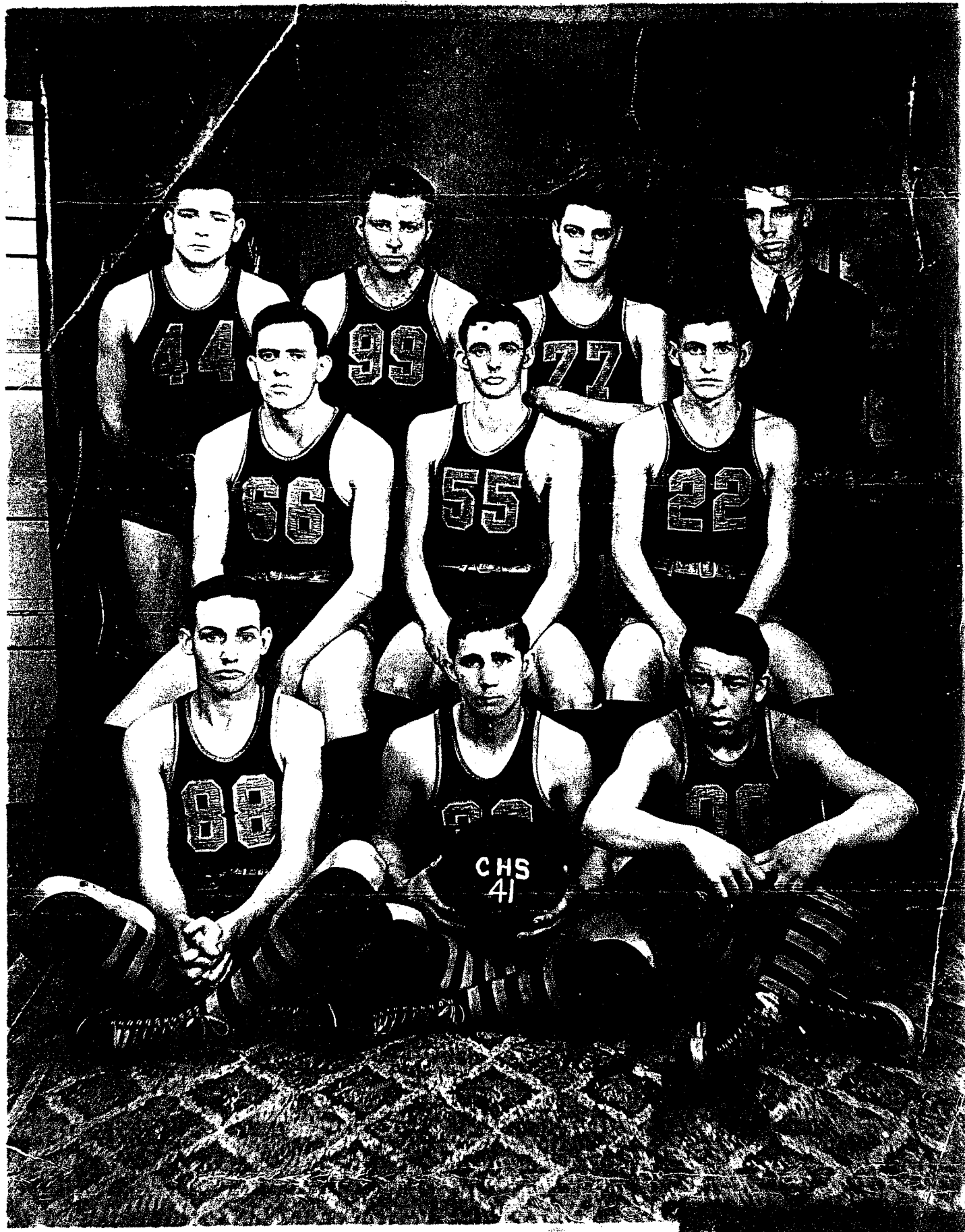
A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Patricia A. Nielsen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Patricia A. Nielsen
421 Malabu Drive
Lexington, Kentucky
40502



ZEB BLANKENSHIP
KHSAA 2004 HALL OF FAME ^{NOMINEE}

Section II
Athlete



Elk Horn City H.S. Cougars
1941

↑ ZEB BLANKENSHIP
8th Grader
1941
Section II

Elkhorn City Has Balance, Power

By TOM HOLLAND, Courier-Journal Correspondent

Pikeville, Ky., March 12.—"We have a fair ball club, and although McHenry might pin one on us in the first round, the Merry Macks will know they've been in a ball game."

So says Navy-bound Arthur Mullins, coach of Elkhorn City, Region 15 champions, in commenting on the State high school basketball tournament starting Thursday in Lexington.

Mullins didn't like the way his Cougars performed in the regional tourney as a whole, but was mighty well pleased with the bolt of lightning they manufactured in the final game as they shocked West Liberty 67-25.

Although Elkhorn City has won two regional championships in succession it will be the Cougars' first trip to the State tournament. They were beaten in the final game of a sectional meet last year by Mt. Sterling 40-29.

DIVIDED

The feature of Elkhorn's success this year has been the fact that scoring among four of the first five has been well divided.

Bob Wright and Danny Ratliff are leading with the same number of points, 495 in 35 games for a game average of 14.1. Zeb Blankenship has scored 302 in 28 games for an average of 10.7 and Chick Spradlin follows closely with 360 in 35 games for 10.2. Estill (Big Stoop) Hogston, tower-

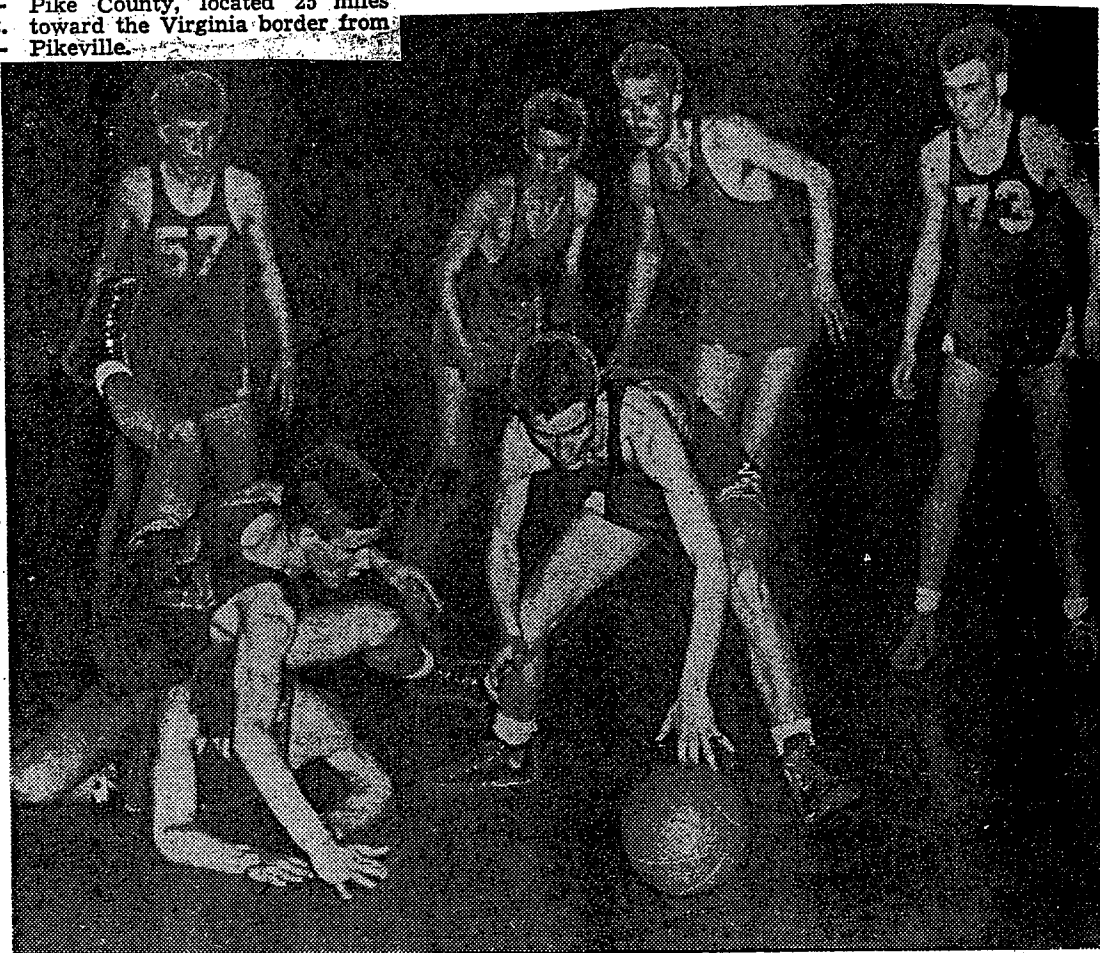
ing center, has 189 points for 4.4 average.

Just lately a boy named Guy Baliff has broken into the line-up quite often with satisfying results. He was responsible for much of Elkhorn's success in the regional final.

The team's average is 35.5 points a game which was good enough to win 34 of 35 games. The Cougars have scored 1,943 points.

Elkhorn is nicely balanced as to height. Wright and Ratliff stand 6 feet, Hogston 6-3, Blankenship 5-11, Spradlin 5-7 and Baliff 5-5.

The school, with an enrollment of about 200, is called Cumberland High because Elkhorn City is located amid the beautiful Cumberland Mountains at one end of the famous Breaks of the Big Sandy, where the river comes through a gorge from Virginia. The city is the second largest in Pike County, located 25 miles toward the Virginia border from Pikeville.



By Times Staff Photographer.

Elkhorn City took Valley for a ride in the tourney opener and here a Viking actually is riding a Cougar. This fast action for a loose ball shows Blankenship, Elkhorn star, on the floor with Kaufman, Valley, atop him, as the ball rolls away with

Huebner of Valley reaching for it. Moving in are Shephenson, Valley, wearing No. 57; Ratliff, Elkhorn, No. 11; Hogston, Elkhorn, No. 9, and Manion, Valley, No. 73. Blankenship, despite this upset, was Elkhorn's individual star.

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CUMBERLAND COUGARS (Eckhart City)

Principal: Rezhina E. Senter.

Coach: A. J. Mullins

Robert Wright, 12

Bennett Johnson, 6

Zeb Blankenship, 10

Ira Ranney, 8

Danny Ratliff, 11

Warren Stapleton, 7

Estill Hogston, 9

Roy Mullins, 5

Edward Spradlin, 4

Guy Bailiff, 3

SCHOOL COLORS: BLUE and GOLD

Won 31 Games—lost 1

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**10th Regional
BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT**

MARCH 9th, 10th, 11th

Inez High School Gymnasium

Inez, Kentucky

ROBERT WILLIAMSON Tournament Manager

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W. H. HEAVILL, Prop. & Mgr.

Phone 221 J. Dewey, Prop. & Mgr. Kermit, W. Va.

Elkhorn City honoring 1943-45 15th Region championship teams

BY O.J. STAPLETON
STAFF WRITER

ELKHORN CITY — It's all about tradition tonight at the Elkhorn City High School Gym.

The Cougars will be taking on the Buckhorn Wildcats at 7:30, but there will be a special ceremony held before the game.

The 1943-45 Cougar basketball teams will be honored by having their jerseys retired and hung in the gym.

Those teams won the Regional title for three straight years and went on to the state tournament.

The only other teams to ever accomplish that feat were Virgie from 1977-79, Inez from 1934-37, Belfry from 1990-1992 and Paintsville from 1985-1987 and 1995-98.

Those teams are still talked about today with reverence and pride.

"It is certainly something you talk to the kids about," said EC Coach Randy McCoy. "I used it to try and revive the tradition. It was important in 1993 when we went to the state tournament. We talked about how Elkhorn City hadn't been there in nearly 50 years."

The teams were coached by Art "Mock" Mullins, one of the most storied coaches in the county.

"He coached here for 17-18 years. He got those regional championships during his first three years as coach," McCoy said. "He was also the first football coach at Elkhorn and coached the baseball team to the state tournament as well."

The team was led by a trio of stellar performers: Zeb Blankenship, Danny Ratliff and Bob Wright.

"They were all three All-State players," McCoy said. "They were certainly three of the outstanding players to ever play at Elkhorn as they led those teams to the state tournaments."

The team had played together for their whole lives, which helped them when it tournament time rolled around.

"We started playing grade-school basketball together in the fifth grade," Ratliff said. "We played on an old dirt court together since we were old enough to walk. In order to get into the gym to play we used to cut grass and clean up for the janitor and he'd let us in there to play."

The Cougar squads truly loved the game and would do whatever it took just to get to play together.

"The school was always closed during the summer and Christmas break," Blankenship said. "We had a janitor named Snead Wallace and we would do whatever odd jobs just so he would open the gym and let us in to play. We would cut grass and help him make brooms ... whatever it took."

They would also play no matter what the weather.

"We didn't practice year-round back in those days," Blankenship said. "So over

Christmas vacation we would get Snead to let us in the gym and we'd play. It wasn't heated, but we played anyway."

That love of the game was what help propel the team from the tiny school in the mountains into the state tournament.

The first year the Cougars won the 15th Region they didn't get to play in an actual Sweet Sixteen in Lexington.

Because World War II was going on at the time, the state tournament was broken up into sectionals. EC went to Mayfield and beat Millersburg Military Institute. They then went to Mount Sterling and lost, thus ending the 1942-43 season.

In 1944 the state tournament was moved back to Lexington. The Cougars beat McHenry in the first round, but lost to Harlan in the second.

That Harlan squad went on to win the state tournament that year on the play of Wallace "Wah Wah" Jones. Jones was later an All-American in college while playing for the University of Kentucky.

The final year they won the regional title, the team almost went into the state tournament without Blankenship and Ratliff. The duo was almost drafted into the army due to the war.

"We went to take our physical right after the regular season," Blankenship said. "We were called up to Huntington to take it, but they let us finish high school, which was the proper thing to do."

The state tournament was held in Louisville and the Cougars beat Louisville Valley in the first round. They ran into Jones and Harlan once again in the second round and lost.

It was still a great accomplishment for Elkhorn City. Just getting to go to the state tournaments was a big thrill for those young players.

"Back then basketball was the major thing," Wright said. "We didn't have any football or baseball so all the fan interest was directed at us. It was a real honor for us to get to go to the state tournament."

It was like being in the movies for the small-town boys from Elkhorn.

"When we went to the state tournament and it was like being

in *Hoosiers*," Ratliff said. "Most of us hadn't been out of the mountains before and it was a big deal to us to go down state and order food in the restaurants and stay in a hotel."

Even aspects of the game were different when the Cougars got to the state tournament.

"It was a lot different atmosphere down state in those days," Ratliff said. "We were used to playing on small court and when we got down there those courts were a helluva lot bigger."

But which of the three teams was the best?

"The 1944 team was probably our best," Ratliff said. "We should have won the state championship that year but we were beat out by Harlan and Wah Wah Jones who went on to be an All-American in college."

Blankenship said although '44 was more talented, the '45 squad may have been the better team.

"We played much better as a team in 1944-45," he said. "We had more talent on the '43-44 team, but we played better the next year. All the years we played together there was no

one individual though, we played as a team and that we were so good."

It means a lot to the members of those teams to be here tonight for their efforts many years ago.

"This seems to be the thing today," Wright said. "Randy has done a lot of work building pride in Elkhorn and he is to be commended for that. It will help maintain a sense of tradition there."

Ratliff echoed Wright's sentiments.

"Your hometown is the important thing in the world," he said. "Being recognized by your hometown is one of the warmest feelings in the world. It's something that really means a lot to you when you get older."

Other players on those teams included E.H. Nichols, Ed Coleman, Edward "C" Spradlin, Richard Jackson, Jim Marinaro, Ralph Ratliff, Bailiff, Bennett Johnson, Ed Ramey, Ira Ramey, Estill "S" Hogston, Godfrey Salyers, Ben Stapleton, John F. Franklin Sanders, "Pistol" Mullins and Walter Ramey.

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY



LEXINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

April 30, 1945

ZEB
Mr. ~~Ted~~ Blankenship
High School
Elkhorn City, Kentucky

ZEB
Dear Ted:

I am wondering if it would be possible for you to come down here this coming Friday to talk to me about the possibility of you attending the University of Kentucky. I would like for you to stay until Sunday.

We will be glad to pay all of your expenses for this trip. If this is agreeable to you, just go down to the station and buy a ticket, and I will reimburse you for it when you get here.

Sincerely yours,

A. F. Rupp

A. F. RUPP
Basketball Coach

Kentucky All-Stars, 1945



Ralph Beard

Jim Hughes, third from left in back row, and Joe Brummett, second from left in front row, both of Danville, were members of the first Kentucky All-Star team, at left, to beat Indiana. This legendary team was led by Male High School's Ralph Beard, high scorer in the game won by Kentucky 50-45 in 1945, and Harlan's Wallace "Wah Wah" Jones. The team members, from left, are: Front row, Dick Webb of Richmond Madison, Brummett, Zeb Blankenship of Elkhorn City, Maurice Hale of Davess County, Dick Heman of Bowling Green, and Beard. Back row, assistant coach Ted Hornback of Western Kentucky University, Bob DeMoss of Dayton, Hughes, Jones, Ted McLin of West Liberty and head coach Ed Diddle of WKU. Hughes, who made the All-State tournament team in 1945, died April 21 in Louisville. The picture belongs to Hughes' wife, Sarah.



WESTERN KENTUCKY STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY

DEPARTMENT OF
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS

May 16, 1946

Mr. Zeb Blankenship
Praisie, Ky.

Dear Zeb:

You have been picked as one of the ten basketball players who will represent Kentucky in the Kentucky-Indiana All Star game to be played in the Butler Field House, Indianapolis, Indiana, on June 22, 1946.

Enclosed you will find two blanks which I wish you would fill out and return to me immediately. Plans call for you to report here on Sunday, June 17. We will work out here two or three days and then proceed to Indianapolis where the game will be played. We will return on Saturday, June 23. Of course, you know all of your expenses will be taken care of and you will be given your uniform and other equipment.

Very best wishes, I am

Very truly yours,

E. A. Diddle
Director of Athletics and Coach
of Basketball

EAD:lt

MURRAY STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

MURRAY, KENTUCKY



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MURRAY

May 11, 1945

Mr. Zeb Blankenship
Cumberland High School
Praise, Kentucky

Dear Zeb:

I was down to see Junior Herrold this week. He told me of seeing you at Lexington and also that you had said that you might come to Murray. He also said that you had been turned down for the Army.

What are your plans for next fall? I would like to have you visit Murray if you can do so. We will take care of your local expenses (hotel bill and eats) while you are here if you can come down. If you can't visit Murray, I will be glad to supply you with any information that you would like to have in regard to our school and scholarships.

Herrold is coming to Murray this summer and, of course, will be here next fall. He is very anxious to have you come to Murray, too. I am enclosing an information sheet that I would like to have you fill out and return to me. I am also enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope for your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

John E. Miller
John E. Miller
Basketball Coach

JEM:lw



ZEB BLANKENSHIP
KHSAA 2004 HALL OF FAME ^{NOMINEE}

Section IV
Coaching

Zeb's First Year of Coaching, 1952-53, VIRGIE H.S.

Virgie Upsets Salyersville, 62-61, In 4th Period Rally

Leonard Carpenter Gets 34 Points For Losers With Spectacular Shots

Coach Zeb Blankenship's Virgie Eagles served due notice of their potential power to future 15th region basketball opponents by overcoming a deficit to upset the highly-favored Salyersville Hornets, 62-61, at Virgie Saturday night.

Blankenship's charge took an early four-point first-quarter lead, 21-17, and momentarily lost their grip in the second frame as the visitors collected 13 points while the homestanding lads managed eight. This left the Hornets with a halftime lead, 30-29.

The Salyersville quintet increased their margin in the third with 18 points while the Eagles stayed within shooting distance with 11 markers, all of which found visiting coach Leonard Marshall's squad with a third-quarter lead, 48-40.

The fourth-quarter scoring told the victory story as the Eagles rallied with 22 points to outdistance the Hornets with 13 scratch on the record book.

Leonard Carpenter, Hornet

guard, almost single-handedly spiced the efforts of the Eagles with accumulation of 34 points for high-point honors of the night. The Salyersville spark plug hit 15 of 16 field shots attempted from about 35 feet out and tabbed four free shots.

Lincoln Collinsworth, erstwhile Hornets rebounded ace and center, was held in line by the Eagles' center George Subcol, subbing for the injured regular Eagle. Pivot man Atha Swiney, out for the present with a pulled ligament. The Hornet center, who has been romping in rebounding and scoring, tallied 11 points while Subcol came for praise from Blankenship, probably for his recoveries and a marking of 10 points.

The Eagles were paced by forward Teddy Davis who corralled 18 points followed closely by his teammate guard Roy Dennison with 17. Jay Hall, a guard, stabbed the nets for 13 points while Reed Greer collected 4 at forward.

The Eagles, who now have

record of five wins and three losses, have a total of only 10 points between them and an undefeated season. They have lost by that accumulation margin to three opponents, McDowell (64-63), Betsy Layne (64-60) and Maytown (58-56).

Virgie's fast-improving hoopsters got their fourth win Friday night by trimming Phelps, 53-45, after they had downed the Pikeville College Academy Cubs, 58-54, Feds Creek Vikings, 61-43, and the Johns Creek Bearcats, 68-49, on previous dates.

The lineups:

Virgie (62)	Pos	S-ville (61)
Greer (4)	F	Pack (8)
Davis (18)	F	Hunley (3)
Subcol (10)	C	Collinsworth (11)
Hall (13)	G	Carpenter (34)
Dennison (17)	G	Carpenter (4)

Scores by quarters:

Virgie	21	8	11	20	62
Salyersville	17	13	18	13	61

Virgie Romps To Sixth Win, Sets Belfry Back, 50-44

Eagle "B" Team Also Wins, 42-26

Virgie's high-flying Eagles swooped to their sixth win of the season last night by tripping the Belfry High School Pirates by a score of 50-44.

Coach Zeb Blankenship's Virgie five who have dropped three games this season, had a 14-point lead at half time which was whittled down to five points in the third quarter.

The Eagles built the margin back up to 12 points early in the fourth period but the Pirates of Belfry Coach Bill Harrell had carved the margin to six points at the end of the ball game.

Big Gun of the ball game in in-

dividual scoring was Belfry Guard B. May who notched 16 points. Virgie Guard Jay Hall was high point man for the Eagles with 12 points.

A B-Team game also saw Virgie victorious over Belfry with a score of 42-26.

Officials were Clayton Powers, Pikeville, and Bill Benedett, Elkhorn City.

The lineups:

Virgie (50)	Pos	Belfry (44)
Greer (11)	F	Runyon (12)
Davis (9)	F	Wallen (4)
Supcoe (11)	C	Shannon (0)
Hall (12)	G	May (16)
Dennison (7)	G	Varney (7)

Score by quarters:

Virgie	14	31	26	50
Belfry	8	17	22	44

1952-53

1953-54

Pirates Squeeze Past PJC Frosh 68-65 In First Tiff

Belfry High School's cagers, still jubilant after apparently proving that pre-season expectations were warranted, have a week to wait today before facing their second opponent.

The Pirates will travel to Dorton next Friday.

Belfry opened on the right foot Wednesday night as it squeezed past Pikeville Junior College's freshmen 68-65 at Belfry before an

overflow crowd.

It was Coach Zeb Blankenship's debut at Belfry. He came from Virgie during the off-season.

For the Cubs, it was only the second defeat in five games.

Close all the way, the game had Belfry ahead 45-40 at halftime. The freshmen came back to take a 58-53 lead over the Buccaneers at the end of the third period.

The two squads exchanged goals on six straight occasions in the final frame until Donald Hunt, leading Belfry scorer with 17 markers, broke the pattern with a floor shot and charity try.

Ronnie Blackburn and Ray Bailey, with 15 and 13, respectively, contributed heavily to Belfry's cause. Lloyd Mullins of Carr Creek led PJC's freshmen with 16 markers while Franklin Salisbury of Martin got 11.

Ronnie Blackburn and Joe Darrell Ball were the defensive standouts for the Pirates, particularly on the bankboards, while Mullins and Lowell Conley of Garrett handled the freshmen's rebounding tasks.

Tommy Dean Runyon, former Belfry performer now with the Cubs, left the game in the third quarter via the personal fouls route after getting 12 points. Bailey and Ball were ejected on the Belfry side for the same reason.

The scoring:

Pos.	Belfry	PJC Frosh
F	Bailey 13	Runyon 12
F	Blackburn 15	Swiney 2
C	Ball 9	Mullins 16
G	Hunt 17	Butcher 5
G	Sears 8	Salisbury 14

Belfry subs: Morris 6.
PJC subs: Conley 11, Johnson 5.

Officials: Clayton Powers & Ted Deskins.

BELFRY HIGH SCHOOL
1954-55
1955-56

Belfry Loses 80-78 Overtime Decision To Dorton Outfit

Belfry faces Meade Memorial at Belfry tonight, with hopes for an unbeaten season gone.

The Pirates lost 80-78 last night to Dorton in an overtime at Dorton.

A last-second four shot by Dorton sent the game into overtime when the regulation score ended 72-a. Dorton outscored Belfry, 8-6, in the extra period for the win.

It was Belfry's first loss in two outings.

Ronnie Blackburn's one-hand jump shot brought 20 points for

Bailey, with 17 and 16, respectively, aided the losing cause.

For Dorton, Donald Goodson got 2 points for game honors.

Blackburn, Joe Ball and Bill Sears rebounding while Paul Johnson and James Burke paced Dorton's bankboard work.

The scoring:

Pos.	Belfry	Dorton
F	Sears 4	Goodson 22
F	Blackburn 20	A. Johnson 3
C	Ball 14	Addington 13
G	Hunt 17	J. Johnson 6
G	Bailey 16	Burke 8

Belfry subs: Morris 7.
Dorton subs: P. Johnson 15, Kelly 6.

Score by periods:
Belfry 20 24 17 11 6-78
Dorton 17 17 18 20 8-80

Officials: Ray Burke & Forest Newsome.

After Foul Shot 'Killed'

Belfry Loses Heart-Breaker 59-58 To Meade Memorial

Belfry dropped a 59-58 decision Saturday night to Meade Memorial at Belfry.

The Pirates lost despite a tremendous 27-point fourth period splurge and with Meade Memorial star scorer Dennis Butcher, who got 22 points, sidelined via personals in the third period.

It was the second defeat in two nights for Belfry, the pair of setbacks coming by only three points.

Belfry trailed by 15 points at halftime, but got Butcher fouled out in the third canto.

With approximately 300 fans viewing the proceedings, Belfry put on a fourth quarter scoring splurge. With just 10 seconds left, Everett (Muff) Varney made a foul shot which apparently tied the contest at 58-all.

But the officials ruled that Varney's foot was touching the restraining line and the point was

losing cause.

Butcher and James Daniels did the bankboard work for Meade Memorial while Joe Ball and William Morris were Belfry's rebounding workhorses.

Belfry will take on Johns Creek at 1 o'clock tomorrow afternoon at Belfry in a game designed especially for student viewing.

The scoring:

Pos.	Belfry	Meade
F	Morris 2	Daniels 6
F	Blackburn 15	Meek 10
C	Ball 4	Burcher 22
G	Bailey 10	Banks 11
G	Hunt 11	Wallen 6

Belfry subs: Sears 9, Varney 6.
Meade subs: Nelson 2.

Score by periods:
Belfry 10 9 12 27-58
Meade 19 14 11 15-59

Officials: Newsome & Gillespie.

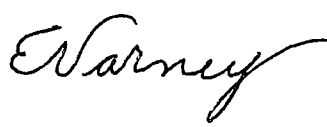
City of Georgetown

GEORGETOWN, KENTUCKY

EVERETTE VARNEY, MAYOR

Memo

TO: Kentucky High School Athletic Association

FROM: Everett Varney 

DATE: May 19, 2003

RE: ENDORSEMENT FOR ZEB BLANKENSHIP FOR INDUCTION
INTO THE KHSAA "HALL OF FAME"

Zeb Blankenship is one of the most deserving individuals I know of who is not already a member of the KHSAA "Hall of Fame."

Coach Blankenship was my coach at Belfry High School 1953 - '56. Everything I am, and what I have, is the direct result of his advice, leadership, and overall interest in my development and future.

After high school I did not have a scholarship to college nor did I have funding of my own to attend. I ended up in a factory in Cleveland, Ohio with my dreams of college and the continuation of my playing career gone. My dream was to teach and coach and model myself to be just like him. This dream was shattered; I was heartbroken.

One day a letter arrived from Coach Blankenship. He said I could get into Berea College at mid-term if I would apply. He never gave up on me and did get me in school. I applied immediately with renewed hopes of fulfilling my dreams.

After completing high school, I earned my BS, MA and Rank I degrees. This education allowed me to be a teacher, coach and administrator for thirty-three wonderful years. I am now in my second term as Mayor of the City of Georgetown. This wonderful man made all of this possible for me.

I look forward to attending his induction into the KHSAA "Hall of Fame."

ROGER WILLIAMS
404 Bond Street
Richmond, Kentucky 40475

May 12, 2003

Mrs. Pat Nielsen
421 Malabu Drive
Lexington, Kentucky 40502

Dear Mrs. Nielsen:

I am in receipt of your letter regarding Zeb Blankenship's nomination to the *Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame* and will be pleased to add my endorsement.

Zeb and I have known each other for over thirty years. Due to our not always being in close proximity, we have not remained in close touch, but I have always held Zeb in high regard.

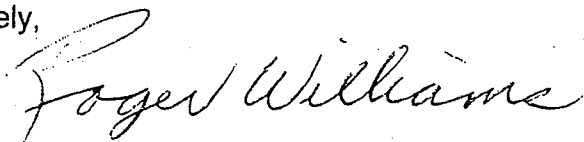
Over the years, I have known Zeb as a family man, basketball official, coach and administrator.

As a coach, Zeb's character and bench decorum were always excellent. He was a good person to be associated with.

I have never known Zeb not to be fair and true in what he did. He always seemed to have one of the best relationships with his players. Even when Zeb had mediocre players, he managed to get "top-notch" performances from them.

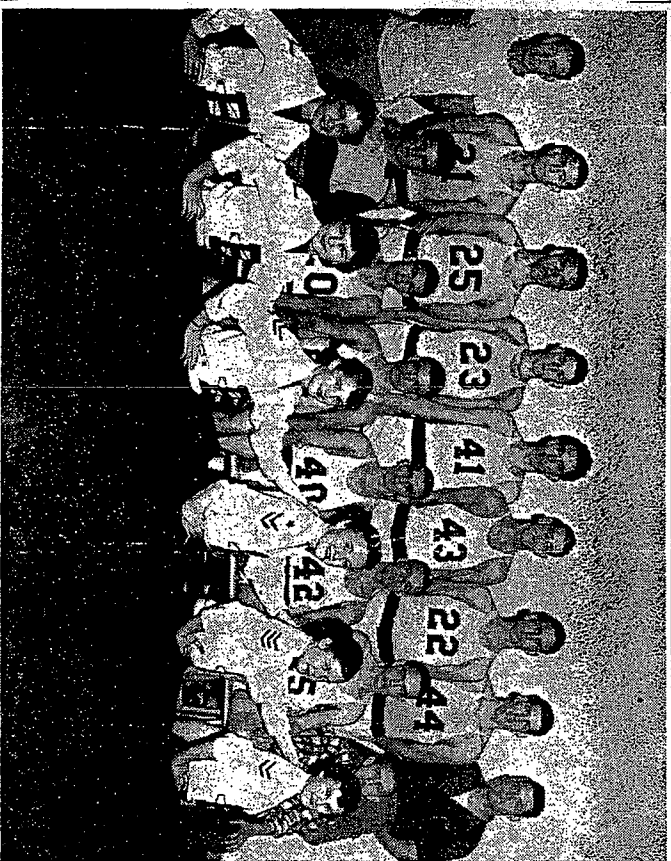
I heartily endorse Zeb Blankenship's nomination for the *Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger Williams". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Roger Williams

RW/jy



BELFRY PIRATES

Principal: D. E. Elswick

Coach: Zeb Blankenship

Player	Jersey No.	Height	Yr.
Ray Bailey	22	6'1"	4
Ronnie Blackburn	21	6'1"	4
Don Hunt	24	5'10 1/2"	4
Joe D. Ball	44	6'1"	4
Bill Sears	25	6'0"	4
William Morris	23	6'2"	4
Charles Blackburn	43	6'1"	3
Everett Varney	20	5'4"	3
Frankie Justice	45	5'9 1/2"	3
Ernest Hatfield	42	5'8"	3
Johnny Maynard	40	5'6"	2
Luther Baker	41	6'4"	2

Managers: Joe Fain, Joe Berry, Harry Blackburn

Colors: Maroon & White

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McANDREWS, KY.



Mutt Varney
Belfry
Scores 52 to Win Inez
Scoring Rare

Belfry Downs Inez;

Varney Nets 52 Points To Lead Pirates

Everett "Mutt" Varney scored the nets for 52 points, tying an area record set by Darwin Smith of Pikeville Thursday night, to lead the Belfry Pirates to their 15th win of the season last night and a 95-89 win over Inez.

The game, which was played at Inez, was a high scoring affair, with the Pirates taking over in the second quarter after trailing by 32-25 in the first quarter.

Varney's points came on 19 field goals out of 26 tries at the basket and 14 out of 14 from the free throw lane, giving the 5'7" ace a new Belfry scoring mark, both individually and for a season, (unofficial) as he finished up with 601 points for a tremendous 28.2 average, probably tops in the area.

After trailing by seven points at the end of the first period, Belfry rallied for 26 markers in the second canto to only 16 for Inez, giving the Pond Creek lads a 51-48 lead. They increased the margin in the third period by six, 24-18, and withstood a last quarter attack by the Indians.

Behind Varney in the scoring department for Belfry came Howard Hatfield with 14 and Charles Blackburn with 13, while Everett Horn paced the Inez shooters with 34 markers.

Belfry thus ended up with a 15-9 mark, and Inez finished its season with a record of 12 wins and 13 losses. Both teams play in District tournaments next week.

Lineups:
Pos. Belfry Inez
F Hatfield 14 Bl'ship 22
F Bevins 2 Porter 5
C Blackburn 13 Horn 34
G Hammock 6 Fairchild 23
G Varney 52 Davis 3

Belfry sub—Baker 5
Inez sub—Crum 2
Score by quarters:
Belfry 25 26 24 20—95
Inez 32 16 18 23—89

Belfry Varney Nets 31 As Bucs Trim Virgie

Belfry got back into its early season form last night by knocking Virgie's eight-game winning streak for a loop and winning 67-64, despite a great last quarter rally by Virgie.

Belfry built up an early lead and led by 59-46 going into the final eight minutes, but the Pirates, with four men fouled out, almost blew the lead as Virgie pulled up to within one point at 63-62, but the Pond Creekers rallied to salvage the victory.

With two new starters in the lineup, Luther Baker and John Maynard, the Buccos got off to an 18-15 first period lead and advanced the margin to 41-32 at halftime.

Mutt Varney found his shooting eye again for the Pirates as he netted 31 for high scoring honors. Mutt had 12 fielders and seven free tosses for his total, while Maynard was runnerup for the Buccos with 11.

Top man for Virgie was Tackett with 21, while Johnson coined 20.

Belfry, which now has a 9-7 record, had 23 fielders to only 17 for the visitors.

Lineups:
Pos. Belfry Virgie
F Hatfield 6 Brewer 4
F Bevins 6 Johnson 20
C Baker 0 Tackett 21
G Varney 31 Osborne 10
G Maynard 11 Bowling 1
Belfry subs—Stratton 4, Justice 2, Blackburn 7
Virgie subs—Damron 4, Collier 4

Score by quarters:
Belfry 18 23 18 18—87
Virgie 15 17 14 17—64
Officials: Trivette and some

Belfry Varney Nets 35 As Bucs Trip Phelps

Belfry got above the .500 mark again last night by handing Phelps another loss, 78-66, on the home court. The Pirates now have a 10-9 record.

Phelps made a good game for a quarter and a half, but the Pirates got the upper hand late in the second period and held it the rest of the game. Mutt Varney once again paced the winners, he netted 35 points.

Phelps jumped off to a fast first quarter lead, but Belfry came back to outscore the home team by 10, and took a 38-31 half lead. The Pirates then proceeded to outscore the Hornets by 23-11 the next canto, and that was ball game.

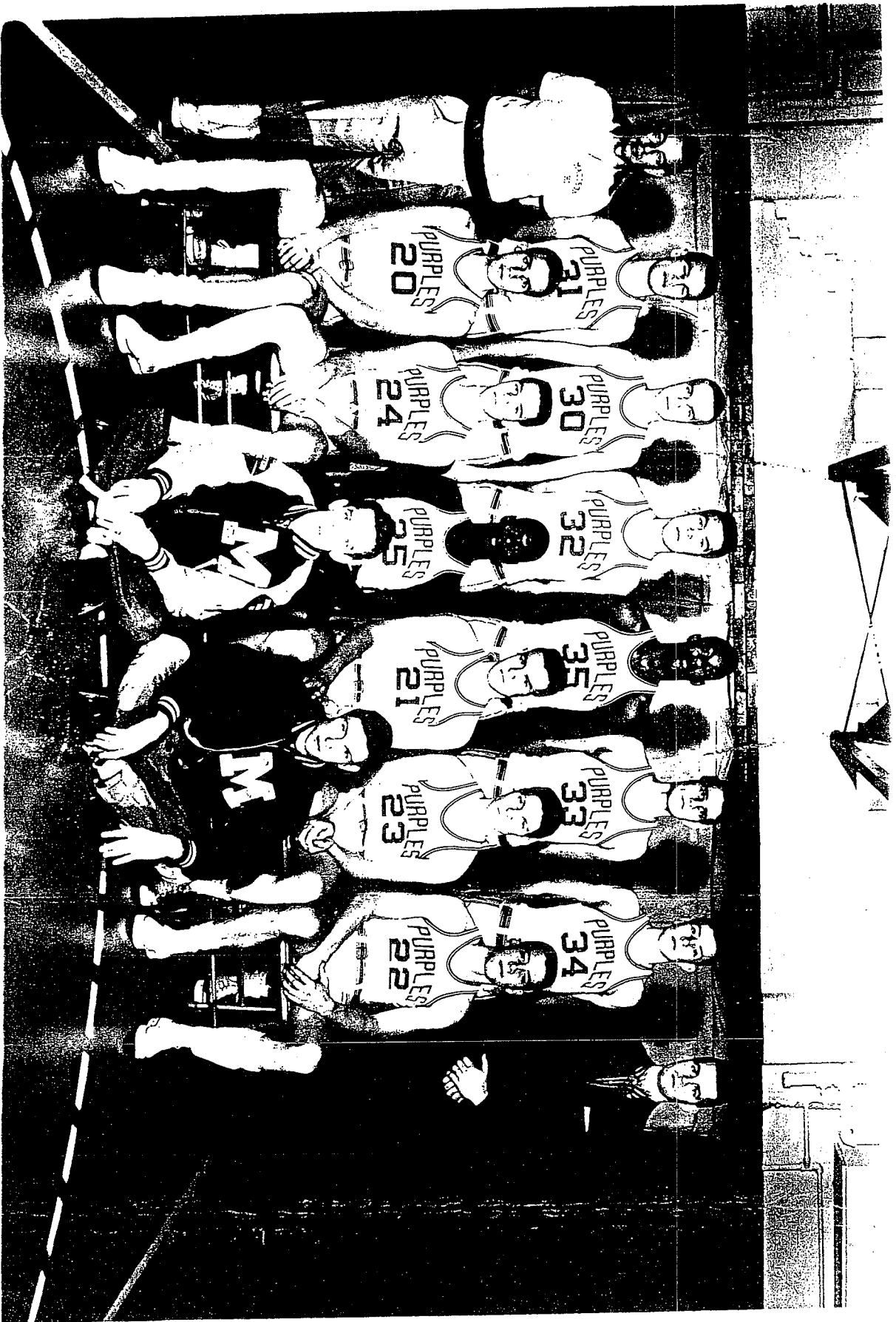
Varney had 11 fielders and 14 foul shots for his total, while Howard Hatfield was running with 22 markers, while Arnold's ins came through with seven.

Top man for Phelps was Dado, who rimmed 29 points, 11 fielders and seven for eight the charity circle. Next in line Phelps was Moore with 10.

In a "B" team prelim, the Buccaneers won by a 40-33 score, James Hatfield the high point man.

Lineups:
Pos. Belfry Phelps
F Hatfield 22 Full
F Blackburn 4 Moore
C Baker 2 Skee
G Varney 35 Vaughn
G Bevins 7 Dado
Belfry subs—Justice 2, Blackburn 6
Phelps subs—Hunt 6, Frisbie 5

Score by quarters:
Belfry 19 19 23 17—78
Phelps 21 10 13 22—66
Officials: Newsome and Leslie



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IRVINE HIGH SCHOOL

Colors: Black and Gold

Name	Pos.	Gr.	Ht.	No.	Name	Pos.	Gr.	Ht.
Able Lewis	F	12	5:10	13	Tyrone Witt	G	12	5:08
Arthur Ballard	G	12	5:10	14	Glenn Sexton	F	12	6:01
J. B. Wiseman	G	12	6:00	15	R. H. Palmer	G	12	5:07
Sam Watson	C	11	5:10	22	Dickie Murphy	F	10	5:08
Dan Nelkirk	C	10	6:00	24	Wayne Price	F	12	5:10
James Brackett	G	10	5:09					

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Cheerleaders: Shelia Holbrook, Diana Richardson, Charlotte Masters,

Linda Hunt, Jackie Tyree.

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W.P.	Name	Pos.	Gr.	Ht.	W.P.	Name	Pos.	Gr.	Ht.
33	50 Don Lane	F	12	6:01½	22	33 Dudley Hendricks	G	12	5:08
31	53 Jerry Woolum	G	12	6:01	20	40 Paul Motley	F	12	6:01
30	44 Russell Lane	F-C	12	6:02	35	55 Leroy Catching	C	11	5:02
34	34 Don Mize	F	12	6:00	21	45 William Lane	F	11	5:11
25	43 Jerry Walker	G	12	5:11	24	54 Marion Lane	G	10	5:06
32	35 Pearl Cowan	F	12	6:02	23	30 Arlin Tipton	F	10	5:10

Coaches: Zeb Blankenship, Asst. George Arrington

Cheerleaders: Joyce Powell, Judy Moberly, Roberta Cox,
Mary Ellen Klatte, Mary Marvin Porter, Sue Moores.

Managers: Sammy Sallee, Kerry Woolum,
J. C. Long, Billy Buchanan

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