

Zeb Blankenship (1927 - 2012)

2021 - 2022 KHSAA Hall of Fame Nominee



Nomination Category: *Contributor*

Board Member: 1972 - 1981

President of Board of Controls: 1979, 1980, 1981

Zeb Blankenship (1927 - 2012)

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*While **Zeb is being nominated as a Contributor**, I wanted to also share evidence of his impressive accomplishments as a player & coach for reference as I indicated on the nomination form & in my letter.*

My Nomination Letter to Selection Committee for Zeb Blankenship (attached as separately uploaded file too)

To the KHSAA Hall of Fame Selection Committee:

I respectfully submit Zeb Blankenship, my former coach and mentor, for your earnest consideration to the KHSAA Hall of Fame. His influence and guidance in the lives of former students and athletes, as a high school principal and/or coach, has left lasting impressions on all he touched. The letters and documents provided to you validates his integrity, his interest and concerns for the athletes of Kentucky, and students of schools he served. He wanted the student athlete to excel both on AND off the court, and that's what he did for me!

I have known Coach since I was 15 years old. He was my high school coach at Belfry from 1954-56. Long story short, I would not be where I am today if not for Zeb Blankenship. I had graduated from high school, moved to Cleveland, OH, and was working in a factory when he offered to help me enroll into Berea College. I graduated, have a BS, MA, and Rank I. I lived my dream of teaching and coaching at Scott County HS, building a state-tournament quality program. I've been able to provide for my family, and upon retirement, served my community of Georgetown as Mayor for 3 terms -- all made possible because of Zeb Blankenship.

Page 1

I am nominating Coach Blankenship under the category of "Contributor" because of his service, dedication, leadership, and contributions as a Board member, and President of this organization. Please note . . .

- * He served on the Board of Control from 1972 - 1981.

- * He served as President from 1979, 1980, and 1981.

- * The Ky High School State Basketball Tournament made record gate receipts in 1979, the first year it was played in Lexington. More than \$100,000 difference above the previous years when played in Louisville. (See Chart, provided by Lexington Herald Leader, in documents of receipts for 1978 in Louisville, 1979 in Lexington, and 1980 in Louisville.) This was a tremendous boost in revenue, contributing to the ability of KHSAA to assist schools with other non-revenue producing sports.

- * Record attendance of 21,000, then a world record for a high school championship game, as well as a record paid attendance.

- * His devotion to ALL Kentucky athletes, not only to excel on the field, court, floor of every kind, but his desire to see them achieve and be better prepared for a lifetime of challenges. The student athlete is just that. An education, be it at a college or trade school, is important for their future.

Page 2

As a basketball player:

- * He played in the state high school basketball tournament in 1943, 1944, and 1945, making the 1945 All-Star team, with Ralph Beard and Wah Wah Jones. All 3 went on to the University of Kentucky the next year and played for legendary Coach Adolph Rupp. This was also the FIRST Kentucky All-Star team to beat the Indiana All-Stars, always a difficult foe.

As a basketball coach:

- * He had winning records at all 4 schools he coached basketball. (He also coached baseball and football). Virgie HS, Belfry HS, Richmond Madison, and Mercer County HS before becoming principal at Mercer County, then on to Jessamine County HS.

His ballplayers from these schools, including me, often would stop in to visit him at home. The door was always open. Many of these same players, students, coaches, and friends visited and/or attended his funeral when he passed away in November, 2012.

You won't meet another man any more respected and loved, smart, funny, versatile, and more deserving as Zeb Blankenship. His dedication to the KHSAA equalled that of the students and athletes from every school he served. It is imperative that you read the letters and documents submitted and know he is worthy of membership in the KHSAA Hall of Fame. Former Commissioner Tom Mills and former Board President Barney Thweatt have recommended the same. It is with great pleasure that I submit Coach Zeb Blankenship's name for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Coach Everett "Mutt" Varney
Retired, Scott County High School

Page 3

Letter of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship from:

Tom Mills;

former KHSAA Commissioner

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,

Tom Mills

Tom Mills
Former KHSAA Commissioner

Letter of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship from:

Barney Thweatt;
Former KHSAA board member &
president

From: Former Board Member Barney Thweatt
President
Benton, KY 42025
270-703-2974

Take a Note!



9-22-18
Mr. Everett Varney
It is my pleasure and
honor to recommend my
dear friend Zeb Blankenship
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 35-8,
1944 - record 36-3, 1945 - record 37-9.
He was 3rd Team All-State in 1944,
and 2nd Team All-State in 1945.
(P.K.)

Take a Note!



3-yr State Tourney
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 Tournaments.

Mr. Varney whatever you can do
to help get Zeb inducted into
the Hall of Fame - will serve as
a reminder of what a great man he
was.

* Barney Thweatt - 971 Birch
St., Apt 418 - Benton, Ky 42025
PN - 270-703-2974

Typed text from Mr. Thweatt's handwritten letter (see attached):

September 22, 2018

Mr. Everett Varney,

It is my pleasure and honor to recommend my dear friend Zeb Blankenship to be inducted into the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

I served with Zeb on the KHSAA Board 3 years. We were roommates 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 (35-8), 1944 (36-3), and 1945 (37-9). He was 3rd Team All-State in 1944 and 2nd Team All-State in 1945. Three year state tourney record of 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. Varney, whatever you can do to help get Zeb inducted into the Hall of Fame will serve as a reminder of what a great man he was.

Barney Thweatt
971 Birch St., Apt 418
Benton, KY 42025
PN 0 270-703-2974

Earlier Letter of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship from myself:

Everette “Mutt” Varney;
Retired coach of Scott Co. High School;
former Georgetown Mayor

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.”

invest the funds of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association, including checking accounts, savings accounts, and retirement funds, with the First Security National Bank and Trust Company, the Central Bank and Trust Company, Bank of Commerce, and the Second National Bank and Trust Company, all of Lexington; the First Federal Savings and Loan Association and the Lexington Federal Savings and Loan Association, both of Lexington; and other depositories of K.H.S.A.A. funds selected by the Secretary-Treasurer in the future, with the approval of the Board of Control; 2) that Joe B. Mansfield is hereby authorized to sign on behalf of the K.H.S.A.A. any and all checks and other instruments and/or orders for the payment and/or withdrawal of any and all monies, credits, items and property at any time held by said banks and loan associations mentioned above; 3) that all foregoing authority invested in said officer shall continue until a certified copy of a resolution of this Board of Control, revoking said authority, is filed with said banks and or loan associations mentioned above." The motion was carried unanimously.

The Board of Control directed the Commissioner to ask the principals of Section 6 to submit names for a replacement on the Board for Tom Mills who will become a member of the K.H.S.A.A. administrative staff on July 1.

James T. Dotson moved, seconded by W. P. Wheeler, that the policy of hanging framed pictures of past Board presidents in the Board room be continued, and that a framed picture of the retiring Commissioner be included in this group. The motion was carried unanimously.

William C. Doan moved, seconded by Roy L. Winchester, that the 1972-73 salaries of J. B. Mansfield, Billy W. Wise, and Louis Stout be set respectively at \$20,000.00, \$15,250.00, and \$13,250.00. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Commissioner proposed several changes in tournament and meet regulations, some of which have been made necessary because of the federal court order. The changes were as follows:

1. Substitute the following for Baseball Rule VI: "Umpires for the tournaments shall be assigned by the Commission. Only registered officials shall be used."

2. From Basketball Rule IV-A, delete the following from the third sentence: "secure officials upon nomination of the principals of the schools that will be represented in the tournament."

3. From Basketball Rule IV-B, delete the following from the second sentence: "secure officials upon nomination of the school representatives."

4. Delete the first and fourth paragraphs from Basketball Rule V-A and substitute the following: "Officials for the tournaments shall be assigned by the Commission."

5. Substitute the following for the second sentence of Football Rule II-A: "Each region may be divided into districts."

6. Change the title of Track Rule XIII to read "Trophies and Awards," and substitute "awards" for "medals" in the first paragraph. Substitute "awards" for "medals" in the second paragraph.

7. Substitute "finalists" for "semi-finalists" in Wrestling Rule VI.

J. C. Cantrell moved, seconded by Frank B. Simpson, that the tournament and meet regula-

Newly Elected Board Member



Zeb Blankenship

Zeb Blankenship, Principal of the Jessamine County High School, has been elected to membership on the K.H.S.A.A. Board of Control, representing Section 6, to fill out the unexpired term of Tom Mills who is now an Assistant Commissioner of the Association.

Mr. Blankenship is a native of Elkhorn City, Kentucky, where he was graduated from high school in 1945. He was a member of the then Cumberland High School basketball team which represented the 15th Region in the State High School Basketball Tournament in 1943, 1944, and 1945. He was named to the All-Tournament Team in 1945 and later played for the Kentucky All-Star Team which was coached by Ed Diddle of Western. He received a scholarship to the University of Kentucky, where after the Freshman season he was called into service in the U. S. Army.

Upon discharge from the Army Mr. Blankenship attended the University of Louisville and Pikeville College. He was graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1952 and received his Masters Degree from U. K. in 1953. He received the Standard Leadership Certificate in 1969 from U. K.

Zeb Blankenship has been associated with Pike County Schools in Virgie and Belfry as a teacher and coach; at Madison-Model in Richmond; at Mercer County High School and since 1967 has served in his present capacity as principal of Jessamine County Senior High School. He is an active member of the Kentucky Association of School Administrators.

Mr. Blankenship's wife, Nel, is a medical record librarian, employed by the Kentucky Department of Mental Health. He is the father of twin daughters, Kathy and Barb who are sophomores at the University of Kentucky. He has two sons, Chuck a junior in high school, and Scott, a sixth-grader, both of whom are promising athletes.

Zeb Blankenship announced as Newly Elected Board Member (source: KHSAA Athlete for August 1972)

Typed text from article on left:

Zeb Blankenship Installed President of KHSAA Friday at Ken Lake July, 1980

Zeb Blankenship was installed Friday as president of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association. The formal action at Ken Lake State Park near Hardin in Western Kentucky. Oldham County Principal J.D. Minnehan was installed at the same time as vice president.

Outgoing president is Barney Thweatt, principal at Christian County High School.

Nearing completion of his 13th year as principal at Jessamine County High School, Blankenship had been elected to the prestigious post April 17 at Lexington by the KHSAA 10 member Board of Controls.

Having mixed coaching experience in the four major high school sports at three different districts over 14 years prior to arrival at Jessamine County in August, 1967, Blankenship is well qualified to assume a public leadership role in state secondary school sporting activities.

He coached baseball, basketball, and track at Pike County four years; basketball and football assistant at Madison County five years; and basketball at Mercer County five years.

Duties of Blankenship as president of KHSAA will be to preside at board meetings and at delegate assembly meeting in April. During latter sessions, delegates have the option to amend old laws, adopt new regulations, and may vote on constitutional or bylaws changes.

All high school districts send delegates to the delegate assembly. All public high schools in Kentucky are members of KHSAA. The membership totals 309.

Tom Mills continues as commission of KHSAA. His job is to handle the day to day administration of business matters relative to public high school sports. He interprets the association rules, represents the board, and enforces standards.

The 53-year-old Blankenship is a native of Elkhorn City. He graduated from Elkhorn City High School in 1945. He was a member of that school's basketball team which represented the 15th region in state tournament play in 1943, 1944, and 1945.

The Nicholasville resident received a scholarship to University of Kentucky. After his freshman season he went on a two-year tour of duty with the United States Army. He was recreational director at Fort Meade, Maryland in 1945-47.

Blankenship received his bachelors degree in 1952 from UK, majoring in physical education and biological science. He earned his masters in education from the same institution in 1953.

The principal and his wife, Nel, an employee in the Department of Human Resources at Frankfort, have four children.

Miss Kathy Blankenship is a minister of youth at Southside Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama.

Mrs. Barbara Treadway works at the Veterans Administration Hospital at Lexington in medical records.

Chuck Blankenship is married to the former Kathy Hall of Nicholasville and resides here. He is employed by Stratton Lumber & Hardware Company.

Scott Blankenship is a sophomore at Western Kentucky University.

Zeb Blankenship Installed President Of KHSAA Friday At Ken Lake



Jessamine
Journal,
July 1980

Zeb Blankenship's 1st Meeting as President of KHSAA on July 26, 1980

C 4 THE COURIER-JOURNAL, SATURDAY, JULY 26, 1980

KHSAA to keep present basketball tournaments

By EARL COX
Courier-Journal Columnist

AURORA, Ky. — Kentucky will continue its present state high school basketball tournaments, one for boys and one for girls.

The Kentucky High School Athletic Association's Board of Control voted yesterday to accept its Basketball Committee's recommendation not to switch to classification tournaments based on school enrollment.

The board's 8-4 vote followed a re-

cent close vote (140-144) by member schools to keep the present setup.

Following yesterday's vote at Kenlake State Park, it took all of five seconds for classification to rear its controversial head again.

"When can schools request another vote?" asked new board member Alvis Johnson, the Harrodsburg football coach. "Several people have asked me to have another poll. They feel it would pass now."

"Is there any end to it?" asked

board member Faunce Woods, principal at Fleming County. "If the people who won last, they would want another vote," he said.

New KHSAA president Zeb Blankenship, principal at Jessamine County, said the board will decide if another vote will be taken, and he predicted that the issue will come up again "in the near future."

Blankenship told his fellow board members that they should set up some

plans for classes in case members do vote in favor of classification.

A visitor, assistant principal Sammy Workman of Ballard Memorial, said that when nearly half of the schools say that they don't want to play the bigger schools, the board should act. But commissioner Tom Mills said there was no way to tell which schools voted how, and Blankenship ended the discussion by noting that the board had already acted.

Board member Robie Harper, basketball coach at Drakesboro, did not

vote although he said he favors classification. "I'm a member of the basketball committee, which voted against classification, but my conscience wouldn't let me vote today."

Next year's girls' state tournament will be held at Eastern Kentucky University, site of recent tournaments, or at the University of Kentucky's Memorial Coliseum.

Both schools want to be the host, but Mills said he wants to wait until he hears from the federal Office Of Civil Rights before selecting the site. Human relations and several Women's groups have filed a discrimination complaint against the KHSAA for what they say are inferior facilities at Eastern.

Mills said that Louisville's Oct. 4 Joe Binks Memorial Run will not be sanctioned for high school cross country runners unless a member school conducts it. The Victory Athletic Club is the sponsor. Mills said that he had sanctioned the meet in previous years because he thought it was conducted by high school people.

"A school must be the sponsor and must get the entries fees," said Mills.

Soviet gymnast sets medal record; Scot wins 100

Continued from Page One

porters. But the more outgoing Coe said, "I was happy with the way the race went and I'm confident. It looks good for the final. I feel very relaxed." He holds the world record at 1:42.4.

Wells won fame as a sprinter at the Commonwealth Games at Edmonton in 1978, when he refused to use starting blocks. He went on doing without

gold medal I would be happy," he said. "But I'll be going for the 200, and I will be more relaxed from now on."

Meanwhile, another Briton, Daley Thompson, seeking to regain the world record in the decathlon that he held for one month earlier this year, was on a record pace after the opening five events.

Thompson compiled 4,542 points, compared to the 4,488 amassed by

a creaking age for a top amateur boxer, but he showed there is no rest on the weapons that made him king of the sport.

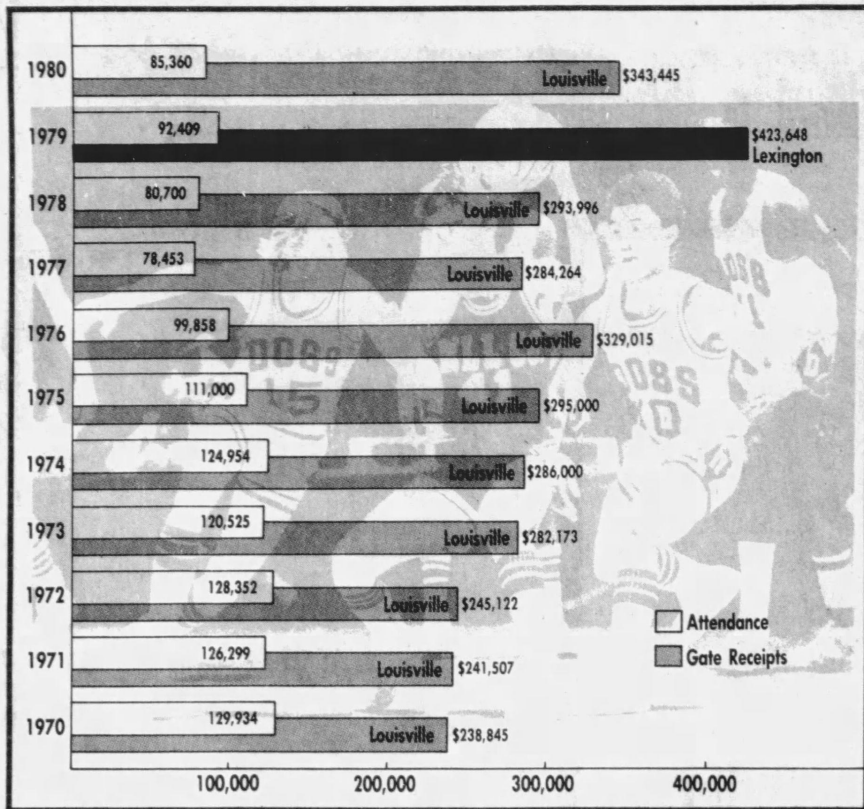
The right-hand punch that carried the Cuban to Olympic heavyweight championships in 1972 and 1976 crashed against the jaw of Samson Alaga late in the first round, and Stevenson's bid for another gold medal was ended when he spectacularly fell on

Stevenson landed a few jabs and a short right upper cut, but mostly he stalked, trying to set up his opponent for a finishing punch.

"He's brainy fighter," said British Broadcasting Corporation commentator Henry Cooper, a former European pro heavyweight champ who twice fought Muhammad Ali. "You can see as he's boxing that he's measuring a

Zeb Blankenship (KHSAA President 1981)

A-14 Sunday Herald-Leader, Lexington, Ky., March 15, 1981 ★



Herald-Leader

Chart compares gate receipts and attendance figures at Sweet Sixteen tournaments.

Lexington Has Chance to Keep Sweet 16 — a Year at a Time

From Page One

According to Zeb Blankenship, president of the athletic association's board of control, a 10-member panel that decides where the tournament will be played has year to year.

"If you go by the bottom line, which is money, we made \$100,000 in 1979 above what we have the last several years in Louisville," said Blankenship, who is principal at Jessamine County High School.

"I think the board of control is going to have to look at this and really take it into consideration. That's enough money to run our entire spring sports program, so I really can't see changing sites as long as the money is there," he said.

But there's another factor, Blankenship said.

Louisville, he said, seems to have become lackadaisical about the tournament.

"Up to this point, I've only had one short letter from Louisville requesting the tournament next year — just a few paragraphs. I think if Louisville really wanted the tournament, they would show more enthusiasm toward getting it," he said.

Meanwhile, he said: "The people of Lexington have really gone all out for the tournament. They have shown the KHSAA a lot of hospitality and enthusiasm. They really want the tournament. I think this has to go a long way with the board of control."

However, Louisville isn't about to let Lexington keep the tournament without a fight, said Joe Bell, executive vice president of the Kentucky State Fair Board, which schedules

events in Freedom Hall.

"We feel that rotating the tournament every other year would keep both cities on their toes. It would keep the tournament from getting in a stagnant condition, as it did in Louisville because it had been here so long," he said.

"There are some things Louisville can offer that Lexington can't and some things Lexington has that we don't," Bell said.

"We have a different facility than Lexington has. We can offer parking on the grounds and 1,200 hotel rooms right at our front door," he said.

However, some of the things Lexington offers that Louisville doesn't amount to big pluses for the athletic association.

For instance, the Blue Grass Area McDonald's restaurants are providing the trophies for the tournament. That means a savings of about \$2,000 to the association.

The area Burger Queen restaurants have agreed to defray the cost of printing the tickets — another \$4,000 savings.

The Lexington Center is cutting its "event parking" fee from \$3 to \$2 during tournament games.

And the LexTran bus system will provide shuttle service between local hotels and the arena for a \$1 round-trip fare.

Those and other fringes aside, the biggest selling point for Lexington's bid to keep the tournament would be another year of record gate receipts. Lexington has a head start on that through an aggressive advance-ticket selling program devised by J.D. Reeves, first vice president of First Security Bank.

The bank distributed "season books" — tickets to all eight tournament sessions at a cost of \$44 — to 13 of its correspondent banks in different regions of the state.

Reeves said this week that the bank sent 25 books to each bank and that "they have pretty much sold out."

He said several of the banks asked for more tickets, including one in Elizabethtown that also requested 100 tickets to a session in which a team from that area is expected to play.

Reeves said tickets also are being sold through Dawahares stores in the central and eastern part of the state. Although exact figures were not available last week, Reeves said sales are

well ahead of the 1979 pace.

"And this is even before people know what teams are coming here," Reeves said.

Mayor Jim Amato has been heading a campaign to have the athletic association declare Lexington the permanent site for the Sweet Sixteen when it takes up the issue of next year's tournament in either March or April.

Both Blankenship and KHSAA commissioner Tom Mills said they doubt that the board can make a long-term decision, such as the one Amato and local businessmen are pushing for, on the tournament's location.

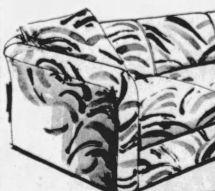
But Blankenship said that, in practical terms, the city's enthusiasm for the tournament adds to its chances for a long run of the Sweet Sixteen here.

"I don't think the board of control can pick a site for the future. I think it can only go on a year-by-year basis," Blankenship said.

But he also said: "In my personal opinion, I think Lexington is the place to hold it."

**Mondays & Fridays til 8:30
Other Weekdays til 5 p.m.**

HIP
PORTFOLIO
COLLECTION



Zeb Blankenship

*President of KHSAA Board of Controls;
March 22, 1981*

Record Attendance of 21,000 for HS Championship Game

Sweet 16 Has 2 Big Winners

From Page One

in Lexington.

That year's attendance was 92,409, but gate receipts set a record — \$423,648. And gate receipts, the total of all the money paid for tickets, will be one of the most important factors in determining where the tournament is played next year, athletic association officials said yesterday.

No estimate for the 1981 tournament was available last night, but officials said that based on the preliminary attendance figures, the receipts probably would set a tournament record.

Zeb Blankenship, chairman of the athletic association's board of control, said that the board would make the choice between Lexington and Louisville at its next regular meeting on April 16.

"We discussed it at a meeting yesterday (Friday), but we are waiting for a full financial statement (showing gate receipts) before we make a decision," Blankenship said. "Lexington is definitely in the running."

In fact, he said, some board members wanted to make the decision Friday and give the tournament to Lexington, but others wanted to wait for the financial statement and also to talk to athletic officials around the state.

Blankenship said another factor was the hospitality shown by Lexington to the fans, players and officials from around the state.

"The Lexington people have really gone out of their way to do everything to make this a successful tournament," he said. "It's been enjoyable; it's been great."

Said Mills: "We've had an outstanding tournament not only in terms of attendance, but also in the quality of competition and in every other way. . . . It's been as smooth a tournament as we have ever had."

Minter and Richard Sewell, Lexington Center ticket manager, said it probably will be Monday before final figures for attendance and gate receipts are available.

Sewell said ticket sales were so brisk that his employees have not had time to determine how many tickets they sold. In fact, he said, his auditors were six sessions behind in their work.



Herald-Leader/Frank Anderson

Bill Boggs, mayor of Maysville, cheered his team yesterday.

ton) have a lot of support and we've been doing nothing but selling tickets. We've really been busy."

In addition, he said, the athletic association sold tickets before the tournament began and those sales must be added to the Lexington Center figures to get final totals.

Minter said there also had been a few minor problems with the turnstiles used to count fans as they enter the arena. Those problems might delay the final attendance figures, he said.

"We found a case on opening day (Wednesday) where one of them was not counting properly," Minter said. "It went to 24 and stopped. The one (turnstile) next to it said over 600 had gone through that gate."

British Communist Party Sells London Headquarters

LONDON (AP) — The British Communist Party has sold its Covent Garden headquarters to a bank for nearly \$3.4 million, the Daily Express

**Mondays & Fridays til 8:30
Other Weekdays til 5 p.m.**

Wall

Save

This week save on the most fashionable styles and sizes to suit your store. Show us how to make your space installation financing available.



Record Attendance of 21,000 for HS Championship Game

C-6 Sunday Herald-Leader, Lexington, Ky., March 22, 1981 ☆☆

Simon Kenton Tops Mason, Wins State Championship

From Page C-1

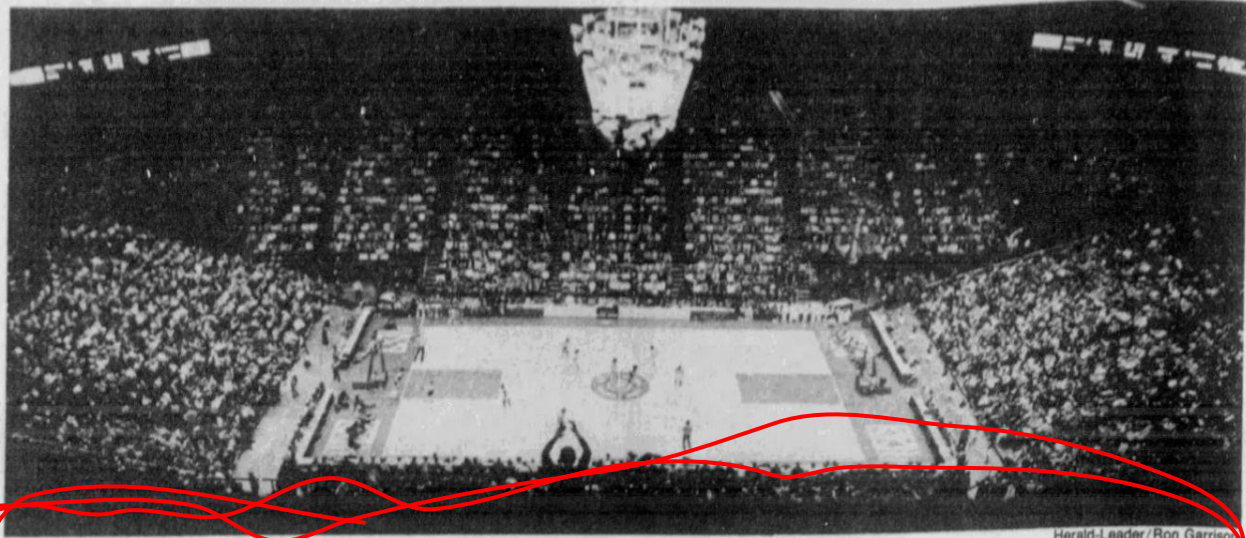
tournament we had a legitimate chance of winning it," Miller said as he stood in front of the Simon Kenton bench and watched the trophy presentations. "But not very many people agreed with me did they? We don't get much publicity up in the 9th Region, so a lot of people didn't know anything about us. They know now.

"We have a great basketball team," Miller continued. "I really and truly believed in my heart we were going to win. I'm not from the 9th Region, so I didn't worry about any jinx at all. I don't believe in that kind of stuff. I knew coming in that if we won, great, but if we didn't that we still had a great year. But things fell together in the third quarter for us and we played very, very well the

16 in the second half, started the second half with a driving layup. Greg Ponzer then added a basket inside, McKinley nailed a basket from the top of the key and Dixon banged in a turnaround jumper from the baseline to trim the gap to 35-33 with 5:16 left in the third quarter.

After Feldhaus got a rebound basket to put the Royals back up 37-33, the Pioneers' Alan Mullins hit a driving left-handed layup, Dixon hit another turnaround from the baseline and a basket inside and McKinley hit a five-footer in the lane.

"We had a 12-inch height advantage on them inside, but we just weren't taking it to them," said Dixon, who finished with eight of 14 from the field, two of three free throws and a team-high 18 points. "Troy had been scoring for us all year, but they were really concentrat-



Herald-Leader/Ron Garrison

More than 21,000 people watched in Rupp Arena last night, a world record for a high school championship game.

(Lexington Herald Leader, 1983)

Editorial written by:

Zeb Blankenship

***Heralding the work of KHSAA staff
and Board members, as well as the
value of education for athletes***

The role of sports in education

Perhaps, like me (retired), former members of the school systems and the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA), have expected the active membership to stand up and be counted for the many contributions made by the association. Praise is in order for the efforts of former commissioners Ted Sanford and Joe Billy Mansfield, and current Commissioner Tom Mills and his staff. Not one of them has ever been dictatorial nor had an interest in other than quality, honest athletic programs at the high school level. They have been personally involved in the student athlete's life as a teacher, coach or school administrator.

There needs to be some support of the KHSAA by all the member schools, and I feel there is. It is time to speak up for its role in the education process! Some order must be applied to athletics — just as order is essential to traffic control. Turn us all loose in our cars without regulation and observe the chaos. There are always some abusers.

Having been involved in high school athletics as a player, coach, referee, and as a teacher and high school principal — I can speak with some authority on the realities of education and sports in the school, home and community.

Physical development of the body is essential for full and active development of the mind. Academic achievement must in part be attained with assistance, encouragement and determination by the student, parent and teacher. Encouraging the student to achieve his greatest potential in academics will prompt him or her to strive to reach their goals in their special interest area whether that be excellence in sports, the arts, science or the teaching field.

The school body as a majority takes pride

in the achievements of their fellow students in the sports, band or choral programs. Large numbers of students participate in these areas. Smaller groups enjoy their drama, foreign language and science activities. I watch with great interest when students compete in the intelligence "battles" on television. Training in these areas is the pursuit of those who have a gifted intelligence and superiority in academia. Most of us are of average intellect, but we may excel in sports, music, etc.

What actually matters here is not to penalize the athletes, but to encourage them. The public at large may enjoy athletic competition more than it enjoys the "IQ battles." With guidance from teachers, coaches and parents the athlete must be shown the proper place for sports in their personal life situation. Life beyond the sports age for them is to prepare them for a career, job, or vocation where they may happily engage in mingling with family, community and country.

The KHSAA is a contributor, not a conspirator in the field of education and in the lives of our students. If coaches tend to give sports a bad name and students a poor slant on life let them be disqualified and made exempt from involvement in school activities. Personally, I agree that coaches rather than athletes should be penalized for infractions.

The KHSAA should be allowed to pursue its primary purpose, which is to promote the student athlete in an honest manner, and to support the development of sports for any student who wishes to participate in their special interest whether that be basketball, football, swimming, tennis, baseball, wrestling or track.

ZEB BLANKENSHIP
Former KHSAA president

Nicholasville

Prominent Additional Letters of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship's KHSAA Hall of Fame Nomination:

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.

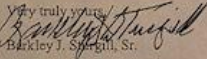
I became acquainted with Zeb Blankenship sixty (60) years ago. He was playing basketball for Elkhorn City High School-I was playing for Prestonsburg High School. We could never beat Elkhorn, but Zeb and I became good friends anyway! He was named All State in 1945. In the fall of 1945, Zeb and I entered 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 24, 2018

Kentucky High School Athletic Association
Hall of Fame Committee

Dear Committee:

It is my pleasure to recommend Zeb Blankenship for your consideration into the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

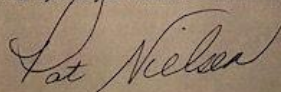
I helped collect information from several people with whom Zeb played, coached, or served. It was my belief then and now, that his record should be considered carefully. Zeb always tried to participate in and promote the best in Kentucky High School Athletics.

Zeb was a member of the Elkhorn City High School "Cougars" Basketball team that won the 15th Region and played in the Boys State Tournament three years in a row. He was named to the All-Tournament Team in 1945, his senior year in addition to being a member on the Kentucky All State team along with Ralph Beard and Wah Wah Jones. Coach Alfred Rupp offered Zeb a scholarship to play for the University of Kentucky in the fall of 1945. His teammates went on to be known as the "Fabulous Five" but fate intervened and Zeb was drafted. He became a member of the United States Army in 1946, ending his basketball career at U.K. He played in the military and at Pikeville College before returning to the U.K. for his Graduate degrees.

Zeb always said that being a basketball official helped him as a coach and was beneficial in all of his other responsibilities. His tenure as a coach ended after approximately twelve years. He then began serving as a High School Administrator and Athletic Director for several years. Zeb served as a member on the Board of Control and as President of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association. He very proud that in 1981, the Championship Game of the Boy's State Tournament had a paid attendance of 19,778.

Zeb and I both served in capacities of school administration, coaching, and officiating, therefore I understand the extra time and effort he devoted to the betterment of Kentucky High School Athletics.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Patricia Nielsen

Prominent Additional Letters of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship's KHSAA Hall of Fame Nomination:

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. vs. 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.

March, 1946
drafted into
Army.

Every thing considered, he
certainly belongs in the Ky.
High School Hall of Fame.

Ralph Beard

Typed text from Ralph Beard's handwritten letter (see attached):

September 23, 2003

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 Indiana vs. Kentucky High School All Stars to
defeat Indiana. He contributed greatly to this game.

We both attended U. of Ky. (University of Kentucky) 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 retired to his roots.

He served time in the military before doing the above (drafted into Army -
March 1946).

Everything considered, he certainly belongs in the Ky. High School Hall of
Fame.

Ralph Beard

(two time NCAA basketball national champion at UK)

Prominent Additional Letters of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship's KHSAA Hall of Fame Nomination:

KHSAA Hall of Fame June 28, 2003

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

Prominent Additional Letters of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship's KHSAA Hall of Fame Nomination:

October 22, 2003

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.

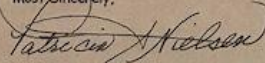
Coach Adolph Rupp offered Zeb a scholarship to play for the University of Kentucky. He entered UK in the Fall of 1945. Fate intervened, however, and Zeb was drafted in to the United States Army in March of 1946. The teammates he entered UK with in 1945 became known as "The Fabulous Five". After playing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



Patricia A. Nielsen
421 Malabu Drive
Lexington, Kentucky
40502

Prominent Additional Letters of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship's KHSAA Hall of Fame Nomination:

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

May 5, 2003

Kentucky High School Athletic Association

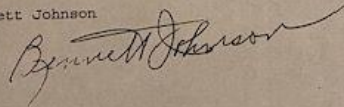
To Whom It May Concern:

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



April 28, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

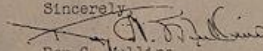
I have known Zeb Blankenship since November 7, 1943. We were teammates during the '43-'44, '44-'45 seasons. Prior to those years I was an admirer of his artistry ~~as an~~ opposing player on a rival team. The change of venue only enhanced my admiration for Zeb, giving me the opportunity to observe his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

Prominent Additional Letters of Recommendation for Zeb Blankenship's KHSAA Hall of Fame Nomination:

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.

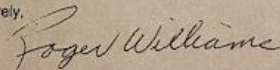
Over the years, I have known Zeb as a family man, basketball official, coach and administrator.

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,



Roger Williams

RW/fjy