

B S C O R E

BOX

President	William Ervin	T. H. Wiley 1957
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Treasurer	Roger Robison	Frankfort 1954
Editor	Harley Sheets	Lebanon 1954

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First Black High School Basketball Player

Most Indiana high school basketball fans know that in 1930 Dave Dejernett became the first black player to start for a state championship team - Washington. This is well known because of the notoriety of playing in the state tournament.

We also know that at this time, nowhere was the Ku Klux Klan more active than in Indiana, so it wasn't surprising that young Mr. Dejernett's life was threatened if he played in the Vincennes regional. Fortunately nothing happened.

Undoubtedly, the Klan, to some extent, was responsible for black (and other) schools not being admitted to the IHSAA until 1943. However, as we can see, blacks were permitted to play on IHSAA member teams; that is, if the coach wasn't prejudiced.

With these inequities present in the early years of high school basketball, the question which comes to mind is: Who was the first young black man to play varsity basketball in Indiana?

I thought I had the answer. In doing research for the Tiger book (Lebanon High School), I had come across an African American named Chad Borders. Chad played only his senior year (1926) at LHS and led the team in scoring.

That didn't last long. President Ervin while doing research for Clay County accidentally came across Otis Tuggle (Brazil) in 1921-22, then topped himself with Charles Bybee at Indianapolis Manual in 1917-18.

Now I figured that Bybee had to be the winner, but to my surprise member Curtis Tomak sent in this pertinent information: In the 1914-15 season, Coach Milton Nugent at Attica had a black player named Homer Daly. I intend to keep a list of the first black player at each Indiana high school and with the help of the readership, I will keep it updated. On occasion I will print an updated list. Following is what I have so far.

BLACK PLAYERS

- Anderson - Fred Simpson, 1931-32
- Attica - Homer Daly, 1914-15
- Brazil - Otis Tuggle, 1921-22
- Connersville - George "Skeeter" Sleet, 1932-33
- Ft. Wayne Central - James Blanks, 1942-43
- Frankfort - Bill "Smokey" Lewis, 1940-41
- Hammond Tech - John Thomas, 1939-40
- Indianapolis Manual - Charles Bybee, 1917-18
- Kokomo - Elliott, 1934-35
- Lebanon - Chad Borders, 1925-26
- Madison - Noble Whitehead, 1950-51
- Muncie Central - Jack Mann, 1929-30
- Vincennes - Ken Brandon, 1967-68
- Washington - Dave Dejernett, 1928-29
- Western - Bruce Reed, 1972-73

Notes and Quotes

From John Ockomon:

Enjoyed your article, "An Overview Of The IHSAA Tournament". You said Westfield was the oldest membership school to never win a sectional. I have always given that title to Shoals. Shoals first participated in 1913 while Westfield didn't do so until 1918. My thought has always been who played the earliest in the tournament and hasn't won a sectional? In any case, it is a dubious honor.

Editor's note: Shoals does hold the futility record of most attempts without winning, but Westfield is the oldest IHSAA member. They joined the IHSAA in 1904-05 - Shoals a year later.

The Wabash Valley

High school basketball in Indiana has always been in a world of its own, with its one-class basketball system. The state tournament has always been the envy of people from all over the nation. People from other parts of the country cannot believe the fan interest, enthusiasm and excellent basketball that it has produced.

But the Wabash Valley Tournament (WVT) didn't compare with the state tournament...it was better, at least, in some ways!

Most of its life, it was a two week event, like no other in high school sports. During its heyday through the 30s, 40s and 50s, the tournament finals in the hub city of Terre Haute, Ind. was a celebration of high school basketball that one would have had to experience to believe. Schools as far north as Attica, Ind. to the north, Holland, Ind. to the south, Morgantown, Ind. to the east and Arthur, Ill. to the west participated. This total area amounts to approximately 14,000 square miles.

In the small hamlets and at the larger schools in Terre Haute, the "Valley" was bigger than life. Each year, as the tournament drew near, enthusiasm, excitement and hope was nourished. It permeated the communities as people gathered around pot-bellied stoves at the barber shops, grocery stores and gas

stations.

Everywhere that people congregated, the ball team was the major topic of conversation. And when the WVT got down to the 16-team finals, even if your school had been eliminated, you wanted to go to Terre Haute and take part.

Dean Reminisces

Dean Kendall recalls, "At my tiny school 10 miles south of Terre Haute, from the time I was in the seventh grade, the schools provided buses to and from the Indiana State University gymnasium. A student could obtain permission to be absent from school by signing up that you were attending the tourney. The only thing then that was needed was the price of a ticket and a little money for eats and drinks."

"Many, many other schools did the same. It was quite a sight to see a long lines of yellow school buses unloading kids and some adults at the gym."

"The school colors, the cheerleaders and the yells all created a frenzy of excitement among the mass of people. Young and old were caught up in the happenings."

"The true beauty of the event, and it was an event, was that year after year, there would be unbelievable upsets. Underdog teams that no one thought could win, other than their own supporters, would dispose of superior teams. And many of the little schools would go on to win the whole "shebang".

Some of the names were

Freelandville, Bainbridge, Clay City, Cloverdale, Plainville, Decker, Monroe City, Glenn, Switz City, Ellettsville, Loogootee St. John's, Unionville and L&M in Indiana, and Hutsonville, Oblong and Flat Rock in Illinois.

Some Facts

The tournament began in 1916 with five teams (eight were supposed to participate) and, due largely to consolidation, ended in 1972. It was the brainchild of Ralph White, then sports editor of the Terre Haute Tribune. In its peak year, 124 schools entered. In the beginning, it was played in one day, but as the "Valley" expanded, preliminary rounds were held at various locations to determine the 16 finalists that would go to Terre Haute. The number of prelims varied in relation to the number of teams entered.

During the 57 years of this epic event, 157 schools from Indiana and 31 from Illinois took part at least once..

The only large schools involved were in Terre Haute, and they won only 11 times in the 57 years.

Linton, Rockville and Terre Haute Garfield registered the most titles - four. Rockville won three consecutive (1916-1917-1918) and T. H. Gerstmeyer duplicated the feat in 1952, 1953 and 1954.

In the early years, Birch Bayh, Sr., the father of Birch, Jr. and grandfather to Evan Bayh, current U.S. Senator from Indiana, served as one of the referees and later as secretary of the Wabash Valley Association.

Cont. on page 3 - see The Valley

The Valley - Cont. from page 2

Probably the two most notable players to have participated in the tournament played on championship teams for the same school, Terre Haute Garfield. They were Clyde Lovellette in 1948 and Terry Dischinger in 1958. They went on to All-American status-Lovellette at Kansas and Dischinger at Purdue. Both than played professionally.

The most championships won by an Illinois school was three by Robinson (1919-1923-1944). The most wins by a coach were four by Willard Kehrt, of Garfield in 1945, 1947, 1948 and 1958.

The most points scored in a single game were by Howard Johnson (46) of Marshall, Ill. in 1972 and Vernon Pfaff (43) of Ellettsville in 1963.

Teams that participated the most times in this 57-year event were Terre Haute State Lab, earlier known as State Normal (54), Rockville (50), Clinton (49), Hutsonville and Linton (48). Carlisle, Rosedale and Staunton tried it 47 times. Sullivan appeared 45 times and advanced to the 16-team finals 23 times, but failed to win a championship. However, they were runners-up three times. In 1938, they lost to Bloomfield by four points. In 1961 they lost to Brazil by eight. In 1971 Marshall Ill. topped

them by three.

Ellettsville had the most Sportsmanship Award winners. They were Bob Crum in 1942, Paul Hudson (brother to Ed Hudson whose 1947 Ellettsville team came within an eyelash of upsetting Clyde Lovellette's Terre Haute Garfield team) and Wendell Allen in 1951. In the mid 30s, Terre Haute Wiley had twins named Willy and Woody Wey. Their full names were Woodrow Wilson Wey and Wilson Woodrow Wey.

There are many more notable occurrences and circumstances that evolved in the great tournament that Kendall's Wabash Valley book honors. We will dig up some more information next issue.

-----The End-----



Dean Kendall with two lady friends while selling his voluminous Wabash Valley book during the Great Pimento garage sale this past summer.

HIGH SCHOOL COLORS

A new project that needs to be accomplished is a list of colors for all Indiana high schools. At one time I had the list two-thirds done. But I have misplaced this data.

Over the years, as I was doing research in different counties, I would make note of each of the school colors I came across. Several people whom I have come in contact with, either by phone or in person, commented that they had started to compile such information, but nothing seems to have come of it. Therefore, if all you members would send in the colors for your county, I will keep a list and we will see how complete we can get it.

Some schools over the years have changed nicknames and colors, so in some cases we may get two sets.

Current schools are not needed.

CORRECTION

In the last newsletter I had new member Mike Barrett the voice of the Austin Eagles, being from Bloomington University High School. It is new member Dr. Bob Wylie who graduated from there in 1957 as a classmate of Tiiu Robison, wife of IHSBHS secretary, Roger Robison.

One of Dr. Wylie's ancestors was the first president of Indiana University and his dad was I.U. team dentist for a number of years. Bob has attended most of the I.U. football and basketball games for the past 50 years. He has all the programs from these games and my understanding is that he is willing to part with them. His attic is full. Bob was a very good football player at B.U.H.S. and later became a team physician for East Gary, Portage and Penn high schools.

As for Mike Barrett, we believe he is from Floyds Knobs, Ind. and thus probably attended Floyd Central. If this is wrong, let us know, Mike.

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Send dues and address changes to IHSBHS (c/o Roger Robison), 304 South Ninth Street, Vincennes, IN 47591. Include name, address, telephone number, school and year of graduation. E-mail if you so desire.

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Boxscore Revue

In the fall of 1996, the initial issue of Boxscore was published, so with this issue 7 1/2 years have elapsed. I thought it might be fun to go back and review some of the contributors and articles this editor has put forth.

The contributors in no particular order:

A. J. (Joe) Quigley, Jr.
Dean Monroe
Roger Robison
David Lee Compton
Wendell Trogdon
Todd Davis
Marty Pieratt
Mike McCormick
Bill Ervin
Harley Sheets
John Ockomon
Hugh Schaeffer
Doug Bradley
Bob Pearson
Bob Whalen
Bob Adams
John Ockomon

I hope I haven't left anyone out, but I probably have.

Some of my favorite subjects were: (1) a Hoosier who went to Illinois and became the winningest high school basketball coach in that state, (2) an Avon High School grad who later coached at Jeffersonville and sat on the bench stupefied as his team lost the state championship to Anderson, (3) the IHSAA commissioner who tolerated racism during his 40 year tenure, (4) Indiana's circus town and birthplace of the fantastic song lyricist, Cole Porter, that had an early great basketball tradition, but never could win a state tournament and (5) the story of an Indiana basketball player who became an actor and eventually won a best supporting Oscar in "A Streetcar Named Desire".

MEETING PLACES

Over the 10 years of IHSBHS's existence, we have conducted regular or board meetings in several fine communities of the Hoosier State. Here is a list of most of them, in no particular order:

Vincennes
Columbus (North H. S.)
Richmond
Greenwood (L. Evans res.)
Huntington (North H. S.)
Lafayette
Greencastle
New Castle
Terre Haute
Indy (several places)
Kokomo
Bedford
Frankfort
Lebanon
Covington
Bloomington
Danville
Plainfield
Crawfordsville
Decatur

Also Paris, Ill. and Western High School.

Many thanks to all who worked so hard to make these get-togethers a success.

INDIANA BASKETBALL HANDBOOK

Member Rocky Kenworthy, along with his partner John Marlowe have put out another excellent edition of this handy and informative little book, the one that David Pert initiated.

They are available around the state at banks, insurance agencies, etc....

Rocky dropped off several at my home and from these I can tell you that they are available, at least, at these establishments.

Paoli-Old National Bank
Vincennes-McCormick Ins.
Dyer Hill Agency-Clay City
Americana Bank & Trust
Anderson-Avon
Greenfield-Knightstown
Middletown-Morristown
New Castle-New Palestine

My Visit With John Wooden by John Ockomon

In February of 1990 I made a business trip to Los Angeles. While there I decided to try to contact and visit Coach Wooden. I called the UCLA athletic department to get a message to him. I mentioned that I was from Indiana, did research for the Hall of Fame and that my father (Dick Ockomon) was an All-State player in 1928 at Anderson and that he played against Mr. Wooden when they were both in high school.

Coach Wooden called me at my hotel and invited me to his condo in a western suburb. I had no car so I took the bus there. Thankfully, he lived only two blocks from the bus line. I passed through the impressive UCLA campus on the way to his home.

At the time, I was reading a book entitled, *The Wizard Of Westwood*, but wasn't quite finished. I learned from the book that my high school coach Dan Dimich (South Bend Clay) played for Coach at Indiana State Teachers College in 1946-47.

Mr. Wooden was very gracious as expected. I spent two hours with him but don't recall all of our conversation. We concluded that he and my father never played against each other. Anderson didn't play Martinsville during the 1928 season. In 1926 or 1927, when they did play, Coach Wooden was ill and did not suit up. He did mention that my dad played against his brother Cat [Maurice]. In the 1928 tourney, Anderson lost to Muncie 37-38 after losing a big lead in the final quarter. Muncie then beat Martinsville 13-12 in the final.

Mr. Wooden wrote a nice

note to my father who was ill at the time. We talked about *The Pyramid of Success* and he gave me a signed copy.

He mentioned that *The Wizard Of Westwood* was not an authorized book and referred me to *They Call Me Coach*, which I have since read. A new book is *The John Wooden Pyramid Of Success* by N. L. Nelson which I am currently reading. I recommend all three books.

I imagine most people don't know that Coach Wooden was the head basketball coach at South Bend Central from 1937-46 with two years out for military service. He then coached at Indiana State for two years before heading west.

As I left, he asked me to say hello to his old friend Tony Hinkle which I did at a Butler ballgame later that season.

This experience was indeed the highlight of my basketball life.

My Ten Favorite Gyms by John Ockomon

I have been fascinated by Gymnasiums since I was a small boy growing up in Anderson and watching ball games in the old Wigwam that burned in 1958.

I was there when George Mikan and the Minneapolis Lakers came to town! Of course I rooted for the Anderson Packers.

I estimate there have been some 2600 gyms used in Indiana high school basketball history. I may have been in 800 of them. My favorite gym is not on the list, unless you consider Hinkle/Butler-Fieldhouse as high school. My father played there in 1928 when the floor ran the other way.

In no particular order and still standing, I think, is my top 10.

(1) Middletown - I played there from 1949-56 as a Cossak grade schooler. I loved the Cossaks!, (2) Knightstown - I played there in 1955 and 1960. It was one of the five gyms used in "Hoosiers". The other four were old Brownsburg, Lebanon (now Memory Hall), Hinkle and St. Phillip Neri in Indianapolis, (3) Ladoga - Just a great place and still used as a junior high facility, (4) Whiteland - A very small gym with just 3 or 4 rows of bleachers, (5) Mecca - Harley Sheets showed this one to me in 1997. Have been back twice, (6) Spiceland - Was still a junior high facility in the 90s, (7) Romney - Just a great old gym, (8) Muncie Fieldhouse - Only seats 5000-6000 today as opposed to 8000 (SRO in old days), (9) Wingate - OK it's just a lumber yard building, but WOW! and (10) Freetown - An unusual old place. Thanks to Wendell Trogdon's tour, during the IHSBHS meeting in Bedford, I got to see it.

Most were built in the 20s and 30s, I think. Only the Muncie Fieldhouse is still being used.

My favorite gyms now gone were the Anderson Wigwam, old Pendleton, Howard Hall in Frankfort and the old Crawfordsville gym (now remodeled). Two excellent books on gyms are Donald Hamilton's *Hoosier Temples (1993)* and Dale Lawrence's *Hoosier Hysteria Road Book (2001)*.

The problem I have is that there were/are 2600 edifices to choose from and I could only name 10! Give me your favorites and I'm sure the editor will be more than glad to publish them.



BASKET-BALL TEAM

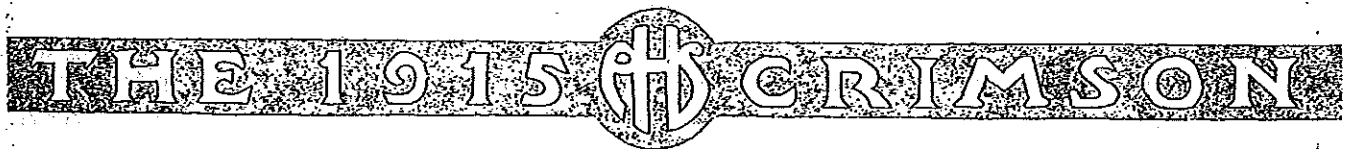
Coach, Milton B. Nugent

Referee, Noble Wilson

Forwards, Dean Stafford, Glen Harrison, Homer Daly,

Center: Park Campbell, Jesse Wilhite

Guards: Allen Mullinnix, Jacob Jones, Floyd Foster, Ernest Ferguson



Have A Most
Joyous And Happy
Holiday Season!