

**NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**

PO BOX 3216, FINLEY GOLF COURSE ROAD • CHAPEL HILL, NC 27515-3216
PHONE: (919) 962-2345 • FAX: (919) 962-4438

NCHSAA HALL OF FAME NOMINATION FORM

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION)

I. NOMINEE INFORMATION

NAME McElrath Dean Oliver
LAST FIRST MIDDLE NICKNAME

ADDRESS P.O. Box 621 Black Mountain NC 28711
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

AGE 76 DATE OF BIRTH 03/29/1948 PLACE OF BIRTH Asheville, NC

TELEPHONE: WORK (828) 280-4198 HOME (828) 669-7069 DECEASED* NO
cell YES ☒ NO ☐

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL Charles D. Owen High School YEAR GRADUATED 1966

NAME OF COLLEGE Pembroke State University YEAR GRADUATED 1971

ADDITIONAL DEGREES (MASTERS, DOCTORATE, ETC.) Teaching Certificate - WCU 1974
IF NOMINEE IS DECEASED, GIVE DATE OF DEATH AND FILL IN SECTION II

II. NEAREST RELATIVE

NAME _____
LAST FIRST MIDDLE RELATIONSHIP

ADDRESS _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE: WORK () HOME ()

III. SPONSOR INFORMATION (PERSON MAKING NOMINATION)

NAME Wilson Jeffrey Franklin
LAST FIRST MIDDLE

ADDRESS 38 Mandy LN Tryon NC 28782
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE: WORK (828) 817-9989 HOME (828) 863-4368
cell

TITLE/POSITION Director of Athletics, Coach, Teacher - RETIRED

SCHOOL SYSTEM Poik County-Western Highlands Conference President

SIGNATURE Jeffrey J. Wilson DATE 10-29-24

IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

IN CHART BELOW, PLEASE LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY THE NOMINEE'S POSITION (COACH, PRINCIPAL, ETC.) AND OTHER APPROPRIATE DATA

POSITION	DATES	SCHOOL OR SYSTEM	HONORS	COACHING RECORDS
Teacher	1974-1979	East Rutherford HS	N/A	N/A
JV Football	1974-1975	East Rutherford HS	Won Championship each year	
Basketball	1974-1979	East Rutherford HS	N/A	
Baseball	1974-1975	East Rutherford HS	N/A	
Softball	1976-1979	East Rutherford HS	Started Program Coach of the year	
Teacher ^(History)	1979-2004	Charles D. Owen HS	Teacher of the year	N/A
Football-MS	1980-1982	Charles D. Owen HS	Won championship 2 years	33-5-2
Softball	1981-2005	Charles D. Owen HS	On separate sheet	483-101
Basketball-girls (assistant)	1981-1982	Charles D. Owen HS	N/A	
Basketball-boys	1997-2001	Charles D. Owen HS	N/A	45-38

CIVIC/CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES (INCLUDE CHURCH, CIVIC OR CHARITABLE INVOLVEMENT)

1. FCA at Charles D. Owen High School
2. Church - First Baptist Black Mountain (Deacon)
3. Sportsman Club at Charles D. Owen High School
4. Worked with the Kiwanis Club through FCA
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

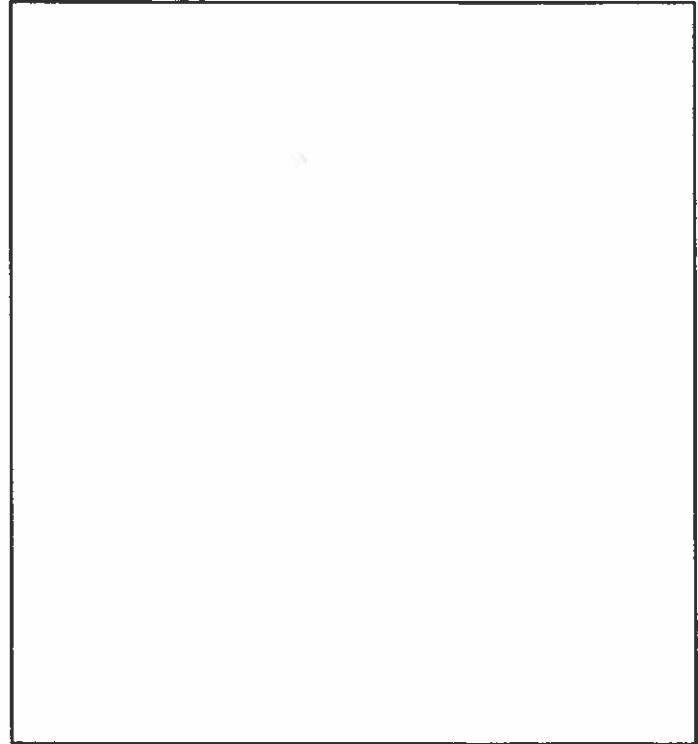
HONORS

(PLEASE LIST HONORS EARNED IN COLLEGE, POST GRADUATE WORK, AWARDS FROM CIVIC CLUBS, ETC.)
(EXAMPLE: PHI BETA KAPPA, MAGNA CUM LAUDE, JAYCEE PERSON OF THE YEAR, ETC.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

V. PHOTOGRAPH

ATTACH A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE NOMINEE
(preferably head and shoulder shot, wallet size)



VI. SUPPORT OF CANDIDACY

Using whatever supportive data you may wish, please describe the activities and accomplishments of this candidate which make him/her a viable candidate for the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. Please remember that only thorough and complete documentation will be considered. Two letters of recommendation (minimum) will be necessary, and newspaper articles, etc., in support may also be submitted.

The committee shall seek to honor those who have directly influenced the history and evolution of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. Attachments are considered appropriate.

FOR OFFICE USE: DATE RECEIVED _____

Dean McElrath
Coaching Statistics

30+ years of teaching and coaching

Began coaching in 1975 at East Rutherford High School. Here he coached baseball, softball, basketball and football. He started the softball program at East Rutherford High School. He also received Coach of the Year for softball in 1979.

Dean moved to Owen High School for the 1979-1980 school year, where he coached softball (Varsity Head Coach), basketball (Varsity Head Coach), volleyball (asst.) and football (Middle School Head Coach).

Softball Awards and Accomplishments:

1999-Owen Softball won the 2A State Championship; Dean McElrath-Head Coach

2000-Owen Softball won the 2A State Championship; Dean McElrath-Head Coach

2000-National Federation Coaches Associations-NC Softball Coach of the Year

2000-Asheville Citizen-Times Coach of the Year

2007-Inducted into the Charles D. Owen High School Hall of Fame

1979-Coach of the Year while at East Rutherford High School-Softball

1989, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001-Western Highlands Softball Coach of the Year.

-From 1993-2000-Owen was consecutive Conference Champions throughout these years.

-In 2001, Dean McElrath was ranked 4th in the NCHSAA Softball Coaches State Ranking.

-Dean's overall softball record was 483-101

-State Records: 7th in Consecutive Wins with 46 1997-1998 (Owen HS)

T10th in Most Runs in One Game with 44 (Owen HS)

4th in Most Hits in a Game with 32 (1996-Owen HS)

16th in Most Hits in a Season with 328 (2000-Owen HS)

Basketball:

He was at East Rutherford HS for 5 years as an assistant; 1974-1980

Coached at Owen HS: Men's Basketball-5 years as varsity head coach 1997-2001

1999-made it to the 3rd round of the state playoffs; won sectionals

2001-Chosen to be the Blue-White All-Star Basketball Coach

Football:

Middle School Head Coach-Owen MS for 4 years

Coached Brad Johnson from 1980-1982

Team record was 33-5-2

-He was a member of the NCHSAA for 22 years. He would have done all 30 except for medical reasons that caused him to miss the clinic and not knowing about it in his first few years of teaching and coaching.

-Dean volunteered many years coaching youth recreational league softball in Black Mountain, NC.

-Dean has spent many seasons since retirement, helping as a volunteer coach at Owen High School in softball and men's basketball.

-He helped start the Black Mountain Committee for Better Sports which provided recreational sports for the youth of Black Mountain.

-He received the Brad Johnson Trust Fund Award in 1991 and 1999. This award goes to the educator who has made outstanding and dedicated contributions in the lives of Owen athletes.

My name is Jennifer Greene, and I was a student-athlete at Owen High School from 1997-2000. During this time, I participated in varsity softball, and was lucky enough to be coached by Dean McElrath. Coach Mac, as we called him, is exactly the kind of person who can represent the NC High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame with full integrity. Coach Mac is a coaching legacy with 30+ years of teaching and coaching, beginning at East Rutherford High School in 1975 and ending at Charles D. Owen High School. He has coached basketball, football, volleyball, and softball.

In my years at Owen, as a softball player, we won 4 consecutive conference championships of his 8 consecutive conference championships at Owen. We were the 1999 and 2000 2A State Champions. In 2000, Coach Mac was the National Federation Coaches Association - NC Softball Coach of the Year and the Asheville Citizen Times Coach of the Year. He was the Western Highlands Conference Coach of the Year in the years 1989, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001. His coaching record was 483 wins to 101 losses. In 2007, he was inducted in the Charles D. Owen High School's Sports Hall of Fame. That's a lot of winning. I'm glad to have been a small part of those wins.

He was the kind of coach anyone would be lucky to have. He was patient, calm, funny, and encouraging. He rarely raised his voice, and would never speak to his players in a way that would embarrass or demean them. His standards were still high. He wanted to win games. And we wanted to win games with him!

While coaching and winning are among his accomplishments, his greatest accomplishments have been off the field. He is best known for his character - honest, kind, hard-working. He is a husband, father, grandfather, and an admired member of his community. While I was lucky enough to be coached by him, I was also lucky enough to get to know him as a human. I have made friends with his children and have been able to watch his grandchildren grow up being admired by him. Coach Mac attends all their events - sporting, theatric, academic. He did this for his children as well. This is the kind of person he shows himself to be

to everyone who knows him. In 2007, when he was inducted into the Charles D. Owen Sports Hall of Fame, I introduced him on stage. I could not hold back the tears while speaking about the kind of coach and friend that I have in Coach Mac. He has been an integral part of my childhood and is a part of some of my life's best memories. He is a perfect example of someone who deserves to also be inducted into the NC High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I hope you will consider Dean McElrath for his honor.

Jennifer Greene

9/7/2024

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write to you today to recommend Coach Dean McElrath for the NC Softball Hall of Fame. He has been a well respected coach throughout western North Carolina for many years now.

I have known Coach McElrath since 1990 when I was a student in his World Geography class. As his student, I recall that he developed wonderful connections with students in his class. We all knew he cared about us.

In 1999, I was given the opportunity to coach alongside Coach McElrath. Even though I didn't know much about the sport, I was so excited to coach softball with him. He quickly taught me about coaching softball. He led our team to a state championship not only in 1999, but also 2000. As I learned about coaching from him, we coached our team to back to back state championships.

I am not alone in my respect for Coach McElrath. He is well respected by others who have coached with him and have coached against him. This is evidenced by his awards such as conference Coach of the Year, WNC Coach of the Year, etc.

Coach McElrath is a very deserving nominee for the NC Softball Hall of Fame. He has a unique approach to motivating his players to be the very best they can be. He brings out the best in those who coach with him. He will bring respect to what it means to be a member of the Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,
Jack Slaughter
Coach, OHS

DELAY—There was a major delay with the mailing of the Fall bulletin. Even though it was sent from the NCHSAA to the post office on September 8, there were major problems getting it out from there that were beyond the control of the NCHSAA. We apologize for the inconvenience and certainly hope that it will not happen again.

Winter 2000-01

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NCHSAA BULLETIN

Top Coaching Marks Listed As Reported By Schools

Each school in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association is required to complete a School Information Sheet, and this document contains a lot of facts and figures about each of the NCHSAA's 334 member schools. This information is used in a variety of ways, including sports mailings, entries in the NCHSAA Directory, and the listing of coaches' career records.

Association intern Jason Tant did an outstanding job going through the information sheets, compiling their lists and following up with phone calls where necessary so that this list might be published. The following lists are not intended to be comprehensive or complete, but are based on those schools which returned School Information Sheets containing this information.

We have taken care to make this list as accurate as possible. These records are for active coaches only, and if a coach at your school or in your area is not listed, it is probably because the records were not included on the form. If there are additions or corrections, please let us know because we want it to be as accurate as possible.

This has become sort of an annual tradition in the Bulletin. We appreciate all those schools which take the time to submit the information, and we appreciate the efforts of our interns to do the research.

We are glad to recognize these outstanding teachers and coaches from across the state of North Carolina.

Career Coaching Marks

as submitted by member schools on School Information Sheets

FOOTBALL (includes 1999 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Bob Paroli	Douglas Byrd	302-144-11	42
2. Jack Holley	Wallace-Rose hill	294-73-9	32
3. Daryl Allen	Hertford County	294-108	35
4. Tom Brown	Maiden	266-93-4	32
5. Gary Whitman	High Point Central	233-93	28
6. Hal Stewart	Triton	216-69	23
7. David Gentry	Murphy	210-117	29
8. Jerry Cash	East Rutherford	208-131	
9. Bobby Poss	AC Reynolds	205-83-1	25
10. Bob Lewis	Clinton	202-97-6	30

TEEN'S BASKETBALL (includes 1999-00 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Ron Miller	South View	601-377	35
2. Gene Doane	South Brunswick	594-187	
3. Butch Smart	Highlands	580-414	32
4. Rick Wood	West Henderson	579-318	34
5. Bob Murphy	Avden Grifton	540-239	35
6. Robert Moore	Asheville	502-283*	32
7. Howard West	R.J. Reynolds	471-196	27
8. James Howell	Warren County	439-243	32
9. Glenn McKoy	Whiteville	439-114	21
10. Jim Young	Davie	431-195	

*includes 221-132 at collegiate level

OMEN'S BASKETBALL (includes 1999-00 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Tom Pryor	Polk County	702-242	43
2. Lindsey Page	Bartlett-Yancey	537-329*	
3. Sandra Langley	SouthWest Edgercombe	504-127	25
4. Mike Silver	McDowell	482-167	25
5. Don Amos	Graham	464-224	28
6. Wayne Williams	Richmond Senior	423-242	
7. John Ralls	Ledford Senior	420-150	
8. Jerry Hunter	East Duplin	418-124	25
9. Tommy Edwards	Bunker Hill	415-199	26
10. Fred White	John A Holmes	375-211	23

*includes 519-325 record as men's varsity coach

ILLEYBALL (includes 1999 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Kathy Stefanou	Millbrook	636-131	29
2. Suzie Pignetti	David W. Butler	491-98	22
3. Jan Stanley	West Henderson	428-98	25
4. Sherry Norris	Chapel Hill	417-217	23
5. Rachel Cagle	Southwestern Randolph	393-125	25
6. Susan DeWeese	Enka	393-159	25
7. Ron Strickland	Hoggard	382-95	21
8. Ruby Sutton	E. A. Laney	382-108	22
9. Carolyn Temple	West Carteret	375-167	28
10. Howard Barnhill	West Charlotte	369-92	19

SEBALL (includes 2000 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Ronald Vincent	J. H. Rose	560-154	30
2. James Frilghum	Greene Central	540-304-2	39
3. Gary Swanson	Mount Pleasant	506-276	21
4. Henry Jones	Cherryville	454-163	27

5. Barry Hall	East Surry	425-213	25
6. Andy Pleasant	Clayton	382-242	27
7. Pat James	Enka	377-173	25
8. Bruce Bolick	East Lincoln	357-299	30
9. Randy Ledford	South View	354-189	23
10. Milton Senter	Fuquay-Varina Senior	330-195	22

MEN'S SOCCER (includes 1999 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. George Kennedy	Western Guilford	548-155-37*	27
2. Zack Osborne	Page	410-112-35	27
3. Bob Vroom	Swansboro	368-66-18	20
4. Steve Morgan	Hickory	345-59-15	18
5. Boris Sylvia	Laney	342-109-20	
6. Ron Holtsford	Jacksonville	340-59-26	21
7. Herk DeCraw	Grimsley	336-79-21	21
8. Frank Riddlehoover	Polk County	319-119-21	26
9. Larry Bosc	East Mecklenburg	306-125-32	22
10. Francisco Blanco	Lejeune	287-162-18	35

*includes 140-57 at collegiate level

WOMEN'S SOCCER (includes 2000 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Zack Osborne	Page	324-63-20	21
2. Herk DeGraw	Grimsley	286-37	16
3. Ron Benson	Chapel Hill	270-64-27	26
4. Greg Crowley	South Iredell	210-60	14
5. Paul Dinkertor	Leesville Road	201-77-29	13
6. George Kennedy	Western Guilford	186-51-92	
7. Keith Donnelly	Mount Tabor	179-78-22	13
8. Mike Perry	Hunt	173-30	10
9. Steve Turner	Charles E. Jordan	171-93-16	
10. Steve Moore	East Wake	145-121-14	

SOFTBALL (includes 2000 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Mike Lambros	North Davidson	423-60	20
2. Jimmy Fleming	South Granville	404-25-2	18
3. Eddie Dees	South View	394-89	18
4. Dean McElath	Charles D. Owen	378-93	22
5. Roxanne Procter	Burns	349-68	
6. Mary Jane Mash	AC Reynolds	346-124	26
7. Monte Sherrill	Alexander Central	344-34	12
8. Paula York	Richmond County	336-137	
9. Sallye McLauren	Laurinburg Charter	326-124	30
10. Mike Lovin	Bunn	268-163	23

WRESTLING (includes 1999-00 season)

Coach	School	Record	Years
1. Bill Mayhew	South Iredell	512-92-1	35
2. Walt Tolarchyck	Riverside	406-59	
3. Milt Sherman	D.H. Conley	372-96-4	25
4. Greg Frey	John M. Morehead	362-43	21
5. Andy Hawks	Cummings	338-37-4	
6. Jerry Winterto	Cary	334-28	
7. Buddy Lowery	Davie	331-60	24
8. R. L. Lail	West Rowan	285-172	21
9. Mike Stanbridge	South View	283-43-2	22
10. Tom Marsh	New Bern	275-77-1	19
11. Homer Spring	Dixon	244-28	13



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Phone: 317-972-6900 • Fax: 317-822-5700 • www.nfhs.org

Robert F. Kanaby, Executive Director

January 31, 2001

Dean McElrath
Owen High School
99 Lake Eden Rd.
Black Mountain, NC 28711

Dear Dean McElrath:

It is my honor and privilege to inform you, on behalf of the National Federation Coaches Association (NFCA), that you have been selected to receive the 2000 coach award for your state in the sport of Softball.

Your contributions on behalf of high school athletics are deserving of our appreciation. You will receive a certificate of recognition from the NFCA and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). This certificate will be sent to and distributed by the NFCA representative in your state. We have also enclosed a ring order in the event you wish to order one.

Congratulations on being selected to represent all the deserving coaches from your state. Again, thank you for your many contributions to the youth of this country.

Sincerely,

Tim Flannery
NFCA Liaison
NFHS Assistant Director

TF:bw

enclosure

c: Kenny Ford

McElrath named as top coach

The North Carolina High School Athletic Association has recognized Dean McElrath as one of the top 12 active softball coaches in the state of North Carolina.

■ In 15 years as a high school softball coach, McElrath's teams have compiled a 220-68 record, with 10 of those years at Owen High School. Prior to that, he coached at East Rutherford High in Forest City.

McElrath has the ninth best record in the state. He attributes his success to the talented and determined athletes he has coached.

The only other coach honored in the West was Judy Nichols of Robbinsville, who has a 275-69 mark after 22 years.

Leading the state is Hazel Phillips of Carver. Her 27-year record is 542-102.

and should not be
a fine line. We're
have to find some
guidelines that will
to all be comfortable
it's not going to be

Cochran said.

"In a general sense, this is
very good direction we might
want to follow," said Cochran.

■ See College on page 12

McElrath named coach of the year

By Bob Williams
STAFF WRITER

Dean McElrath, the Owen High coach who led his girls' softball team to win back to back state championship titles last year was recently named softball coach of the year for the state of North Carolina.

"It was very surprising," said McElrath, who has been coaching softball for the last 26 years.

"To think of all the softball coaches there are in North Carolina and I got the award, it's real pleasing," he said.

McElrath, who says his family has always been a big fan of softball, received the award from the National Federation of State High School Association. Among other high school softball coaches in North Carolina, McElrath is ranked fourth with a lifetime record of 380 wins and 40 losses.

"My family has always played softball," he said. "It's a family thing."

McElrath also credits his award to a talented bunch of softball players.

"We've had some excellent girls talent-wise as well as in character, and we've got some excellent girls this year as well."

This year, McElrath says his team is already preparing for another trip to Raleigh to defend their state title.

While the team lost six key senior leaders from last year, McElrath says he's encouraged since the JV team finished the 2000 season with a record of 20-0.

Owen plans to scrimmage T.C. Roberson on February 22. The team opens its season at home on March 6.

pro-
Arts



Department of
Recreation and Parks

Town of Black Mountain

awards this



Certificate of Appreciation

to

DEAN MCEL RATH

in Recognition of Voluntarily and Unselfishly
Supporting and Advancing the Betterment

of

**Black Mountain
Recreation and Parks**

This 20th day of February 19 92

Sam H. Becker
Chairman
Recreation Commission

Ed R. Kennedy
Director
Recreation and Parks



Department of
Recreation and Parks
Town of Black Mountain
awards this



Certificate of Appreciation

to

Dean McElrath

in Recognition of Voluntarily and Unselfishly
Supporting and Advancing the Betterment

of

**Black Mountain
Recreation and Parks**

C. Mark Hixson
Chairman
Recreation Commission

David R. Donnelly, Jr.
Director
Recreation and Parks

This 15th day of Feb. 19 90

Athletic Award

This Certifies That

Wm H. Schmitt

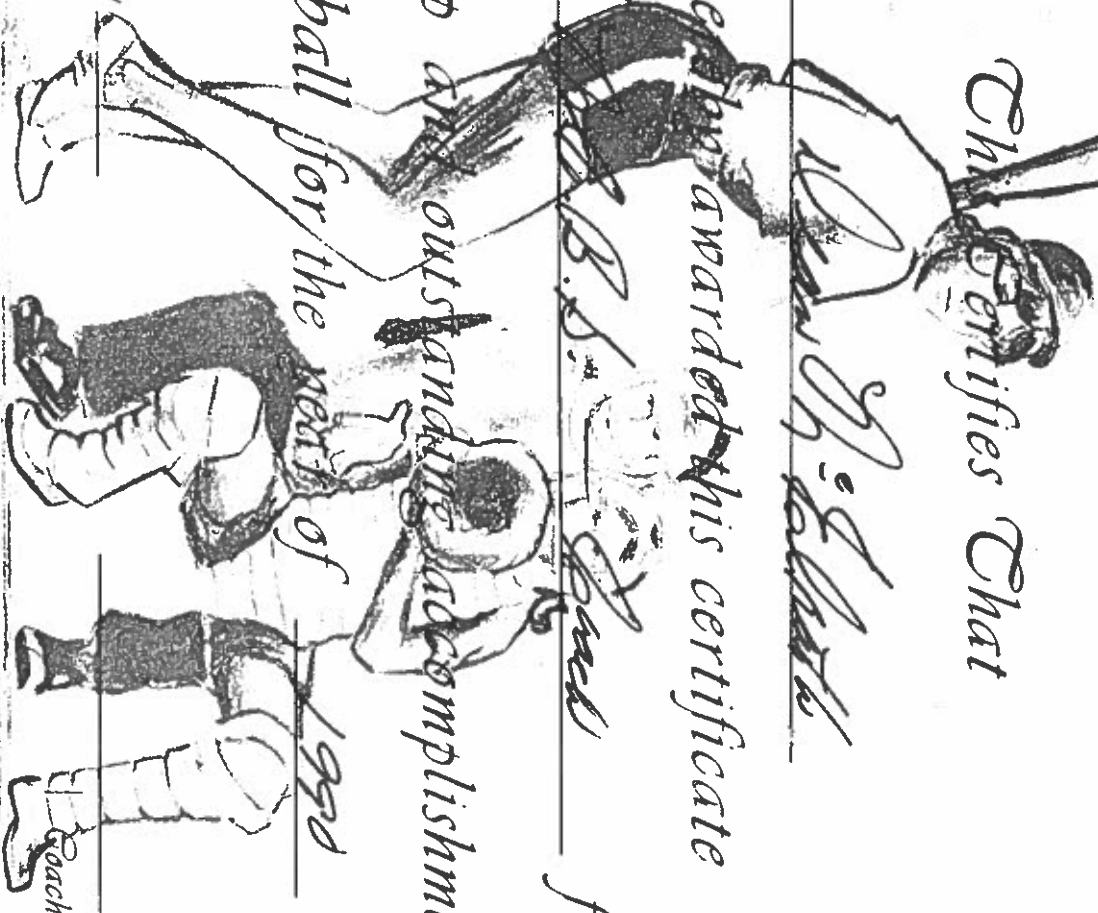
is hereby awarded this certificate

by B. B. S. Coach for

sportsmanship and outstanding accomplishments in

Softball for the year of 1990

Wm H. Schmitt
Domestic



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Cook citizen the world

Letters to the News

Sports program dream come true

Eleven years ago Wilcox Johnson had a dream to form a recreational program for the youth of the Black Mountain Valley. His dream is now the Black Mountain Committee for Better Sports.

Mr. Johnson took a year off work, and with the help of others, he worked eight to 10 hours a day to build a baseball diamond, where Meritrust-Anderson College baseball team now plays its games.

Mr. Johnson, along with 15 other people, started the sports program by staging a softball tournament in West Asheville. They raised approximately \$700 to get the Youth Program started. Many organizations helped the committee, among them the Kiwanis Club, Jaycees, Town of Black Mountain, Merchant's Association, Fire and Police Department and many others.

Other members who helped Mr. Johnson start the program were Hubert Ford, Jim Johnson, Bud Norton, Alton

Johnson, Ruth Norton, Andrew Parker, Dennis Massey, Herman Massey, Leonard Massey, Dennis Roland, Bob Watkins, George Cochran.

Some of the more successful children who came through the Synonema Valley Sports Committee are: Sammy Stewart, David Wilson and Donnie McKeith who all played Major League baseball, and coaches Kenny Ford and Glen Strickland. The latest success is Brad Daugherty, who will play college basketball with the Tar Heels of North Carolina.

The first year the Senior Babe Ruth league went undefeated with an 18 and 9 record, and Andrew Parker took the 13 year olds' team to the state tournament.

To continue the sports committee, we really need the community's continued support. We will be contacting the community leaders and businessmen, asking for their support in the near future.

In the next two weeks we will be

registering the children of our community who want to play softball and baseball. We also want the parents to get involved so we can have a better program, and assure our children they will have the best program possible and that the dream of Mr. Johnson will continue through the years.

Dennis Roland

Here's some good news

I am sure any number of your readers ask why you don't print more good news. I suggest your standard reply says, we welcome the opportunity when it arises.

I believe the volunteer and self-help activities of this community in the climate of a drought of Federal and State money makes good news. Never was there more need for us to share our

talents, skills and compassion for people.

To these noble efforts we commend Town Board, our churches, civic organizations, volunteer police and fire departments, business, private organizations and individuals.

Nobody is pretending that private efforts at best can fill all the potholes, but people working in concert can accomplish much. The idea behind this letter is to get government, business, private organizations and individuals to pitch in.

The suffering that may be ahead if we fail to grasp opportunity is Bad News. A cooperative effort is easily recognized as Good News.

Harold W. Patton
 Black Mountain



(l-r) Matt Lutz, Elijah Lovejoy, Coach Dean McElrath, and April Boehm of Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Owen High School

Kiwanis Club hears about the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Owen High School

Representing Owen High School's Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Matt Lutz and April Boehm spoke to the Kiwanis Club of Black Mountain/Swannanoa last week.

The two students told about the ideas and goals of their organization for the coming year. FCA members reach out to other students who need guidance in athletics, academics, and spiritual awareness. They consult with teachers, tutor students who need extra help in class work and offer a support program for students of divorced parents.

In addition to peer work, FCA members offer encouragement, hope and spiritual guidance to people of all ages.

FCA members work toward making themselves more visible both in school and out, in order to continue their mission.

Lutz and Boehm expressed appreciation for support received from the Kiwanis Club and other

groups and civic organizations that help make their work possible.

The representatives were accompanied by Coach Dean McElrath and were introduced by Kiwanian David Taylor. The meeting was held at the Campfire Steak and Buffet restaurant.



(L-R, back row) Coach McElrath, Elijah Lovejoy, Kiwanis President Frank Deese.

Kiwanis hear Coach McElrath

Coach Dean McElrath and four members of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Owen High School presented the program at the June 1 meeting of the Kiwanis Club of Black Mountain/Swannanoa. They were introduced by Kiwanian John Brady. Spokesperson for the FCA students was Leslie Reese. Other members attending were Elijah

Lovejoy, Hope Hargrove and Valerie Eubanks. Leslie gave an informative talk about the organization and its activities, noting that it is open to anyone, but officers are participating athletes at the school.

"We reach out to all students, not just to FCA members," she said "and we let them know that God loves all of us no matter what." She spoke of how God has changed lives for the better and how this message is projected to students through FCA. The group meets once a week for prayer, once a month for food, fun, and fellow-

ship and are involved in retreats. They welcome speakers to their group meetings and monetary donations to help with the retreats. Interested persons may contact Coach McElrath.

Lyle Ribley, chairman of the Kiwanis Charities Thrift Shop board, presented the following checks, which will complete this year's distribution of funds to charitable organizations: \$1000 to Children and Friends Day Care, accepted by Zachary Wood; \$2000 to Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministries, accepted by Elizabeth Harper; \$1500 to the Kiwanis Foundation (scholarships), accepted by Carolyn Patton; \$2500 to the Kiwanis Service Account, accepted by Neil Orange.

Gene Parks, International Representative for Terrific Kids, presented the original music score of "The Terrific Kids Song" to the local club. Terrific Kids is an international motivational program to help elementary school students improve their grades.

KMHS Coach Named Best In SWC

Season Of Valleys And Peaks For Barry Gibson



BARRY GIBSON, SWC Coach Of The Year

By HARRY STEWART
Sports Editor

The 1970 baseball season for the Kings Mountain coach Barry Gibson was a season of valleys and peaks. He went through a lot of emotional highs and lows, and, fortunately, the end result is a lot of heights.

Gibson, who coached the Kings Mountain team to a 10-4 record and second place in the highly competitive Southwestern J-A Conference, saw his wife, Susan, through several months of struggle with cancer and the fear of that dreaded disease in itself is enough to make most people break under the pressure.

With the aid of his capable assistant coach, Don Hargraves, and the support of a bunch of dedicated ballplayers, the Mountaineers enjoyed one of their best seasons under Gibson, but another low point came in the final game of the SWC championship series with East Carolina when the Warriors came from three runs

behind to take the championship away from the J-A team.

New things are going on, though, for the former left-hand pitcher. His wife's battle with cancer is hopefully over, and the disappointments of losing the baseball title have diminished with Gibson's being voted the SWC Coach of the Year.

Gibson has been voted the winner by his peers. He won it in 1973, when he coached his team to a 10-4 record and the SWC title, and again in '76, when his Mountaineers unexpectedly made the SWC playoffs before bowing to eventual champion East Rutherford in a three-game series.

Gibson has won the coach of the year award more than any other coach in the SWC.

"I really don't know what to say," said Gibson, who informed he had been chosen for the honor.

"It's an honor to be named by your fellow coaches. It would have been a whole lot sweeter if we'd won the championship."

Gibson's Mountaineers

were 5-4 early in the season when Susan had to enter Duke University Hospital for surgery for malignant tumors in her gall bladder. When Gibson returned almost two weeks later the Mountaineers were 6-3 and in fourth place in the five-team Eastern Division race.

Gibson took Hargraves' advice and kept the team together during that four-game stretch when big boys in the Mountaineers' club took them into the playoffs. The Mountaineers went on to the East Coast for first place in the final regular season standings.

"Don did an outstanding job," noted Gibson. "It's no easy job to step in and take over like that. There was a lot of pressure on him at that time."

"Don has always been a big help," he went on. "He's so much a part of coaching the team as I am. We do it as a team."

"Of course," he added. "It's like the old saying, 'You can't win the race if you don't have the horse. And we had some real good

horses. That's why we had such a fine team. The players had a tremendous attitude. We just came up a little short at the end of the race."

When records and winning championships let the end result in one, he continued, "I feel like if I can help make young men out of boys, I will have accomplished my goal."

Gibson said he accepted his pressure this year as a "part of life I accepted it and we came through it real good," he said. "The last report we got was that they got all of the cancer. Susan's healthy as a horse again."

Thinking one more look at his coach of the year award, Gibson said, "I still can't believe it. I thought Jim Benfield at North Carolina did a heck of a job turning that school's program around and, of course, Jerry Adams did a good job over at East Carolina."

Gibson said his only disappointment in the outcome of the coach and

players. That's why we had such a fine team. The players had a tremendous attitude. We just came up a little short at the end of the race."

Other players and coaches of the year for the spring sports included:

BOYS TRACK—Glenn Sparrow, South Point, coach; Bruce Adams, South Point, coach.

GIRLS TRACK—Fred Doughtery, Chase, player; Jean Robbins, Chase, coach.

SOFTBALL—Ole Miller, North Carolina, player; Don Hargraves, East Rutherford, coach.

BOYS TENNIS—Andy Williams, Shelby, player; Fred Russell, South Point, coach.

GOLF—Jeff Bernard, R-B Central, player; Frank Jacobs, R-B Central, coach.

ling the list of newcomers
ix foot, three inch Alvin
from Bishop England
Charleston, S.C. Tol-
us voted Charleston's
town Player of the Ye-
r averaging 23 points and
bounds per game.

al also has three free-
from the strong South-
A Conference. Rimpson
a six foot, two inch
comes from R-S-Cen-
where he started for two
in a team that won the
in 1980 and finished
in 1981. Darryl Robbs,
ot three inch forward,
from Burns High, the
ain to defeat powerful
Mountain last year.

Graham comes from
aston. At six foot, six
Graham will be the key
sat's defensive attack.
n averaged five blocked
ast year for East Gas-

returnees for the Cava-
ill be six foot two inch
Blake Staton, from
rell, and six foot, three
ing Reggie Clark from
So. Clark was fourth
ing for Region X of the
last year and will play a
ole in the success of the
es.

Warhorses close season

Warcolts finish season play

by The Owen High
Journalism Class

The Charles D. Owen so-
venth and eighth grade War-
colts finished out their season
last Wednesday, Oct. 21 as
they went up against the A.C.
Raynolds Rockets on Shufford
Field. The Warcolts played a
magnificent game, winning it
47-22.

Two outstanding players of
the game were Bobby Daugh-
tery, who covered over 232
yards and scored four touch-
downs, and Paul Moore, also a
leader on the team, excelled in
blocking and has averaged at
least 10 tackles a game. Others
were Brad Johnson, Kenny
Owensby, Greg Riddle, Nor-
man Rauschenberger, Denny
Allen, Juggie Davidson and
Richard Duncan.

The most outstanding play
of the game was a check play
at the line of scrimmage as
Bobby Daughtery run the ball
12 yards, scoring the second

touchdown of the game for the
Warcolts.

When asked how he felt
about this year's team, Head

Coach Dean McElrath de-
scribes it as "one of the best
teams offensively" he has ever
coached.

Alumni game Saturday

Montreat-Anderson College
will hold its third annual
alumni baseball game this
Saturday, Nov. 7.

The game will be played at
the Cavaliers home field, the
Black Mountain Athletic Field,
adjacent to the Black Moun-
tain Primary School. The
contest will match former

Montreat players against the
1981-82 Cavalier squad. Fea-
tured performer will be Balti-
more Oriole pitcher Sammy
Stewart, who will start the
game and pitch the first three
innings for the old-timers.

The public is invited to
attend the game. There will be
no admission charge.

Owen on top of 2-A world

One loss an easy trade for softball title, says McElrath

By Sean Coughlin

STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH — When Saturday began, the hope was an undefeated season



AND a state championship for Owen's fast-pitch softball team.

One out of two ain't bad. "I'll give up a loss just to win a state championship," said a grinning Dean McElrath, the Warlassies' coach, after his team came back to beat South

Granville 12-9 for the 2-A championship at the Walnut Creek Complex.

The team state title was the second for Owen in school history. The Black Mountain school's girls' cross country team won last fall.

"It feels awesome," said junior second baseman Lori McGeary, who went 3-for-5 and drove in three runs. "This is something we've wanted for a long time."

Said sophomore outfielder Tiara Wells, who went 3-for-5, with an RBI: "We didn't come all the way out here to lose. We came down here to win a state championship, and we did."

That looked in doubt for awhile. After a relatively easy

day Friday in 4-0 and 10-0 victories against Southwestern Randolph and East Carteret, the Warlassies (26-1) had their problems Saturday, committing 11 errors.

Helped by seven errors, they led South Granville (27-3-1), the defending 2-A champion, 9-2 heading into the fifth inning and 10-6 after six innings. In the seventh, however, South Granville rallied for five runs on two hits, a hit batsman, a wild pitch, a walk and an error.

Owen tied the game in its half of the seventh, but the Warlassies could not answer a run-scoring grounder by Jamie Day in the eighth.

❖ See Owen on page C3

CALL 232-6000 OR 1-800-809-4204 EXT. 5320

Owen High girls win state title in softball

But other WNC prep teams not as fortunate

INSIDE Complete coverage in Sports. Page C1.

By Sean Coughlin

STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH — Four hours from the cool mountains, in the heat of the Triangle, Owen's fast-pitch softball team won its first state championship.

It wasn't easy, but the Warlassies prevailed 12-9 against South Granville late Saturday in the Triangle for the 2-A title.

"From the get-go today, we came out in a little bit of a daze," said Warlassies coach Dean McElrath, whose team lost its first game Saturday 12-11 in eight innings to South Granville of Creedmoor. "We fought and scraped and came back. That's all that matters."

The other two Western North Carolina squads that played for state titles over the weekend were not as for-

one: 257-2900

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SPORTS

BUSINESS

Page C6-C8

Men close to softball crown

Sean Coughlin

STAFF WRITER

1 — Owen's first in the 2-A state softball

4 seminals could not have gone much

10 better.

0 How do you

of two-hit shutouts strikeouts by your long with a 10-run

explosion, on the biggest weekend of the season?

"I'm elated," senior first baseman Barbie Shook said after the Warlasses moved into the state championship

with wins Friday against Southwestern Randolph (4-0) and East Carteret (10-0). "I've never felt as good in my life."

Owen (26-0) will take on the East Carteret-South Granville winner Saturday at 5:30 p.m. at the Walnut Creek

Complex. If somebody can knock the Warlasses off, those teams will play again at 8:00.

"We have the advantage,"

Owen coach Dean McElrath said. "Some people would say we're in the cabbird's seat. We still have to come out tomorrow and work for it."

Said East Carteret coach Jimmy Fodrie: "If they don't win, I'd be surprised. They have no weaknesses." Particularly on the mound

with junior right-hander Jennifer Lamb. She was at her best in the afternoon game against S.W. Randolph, striking out 15 without giving up a walk. In the five-inning nightcap, she had 10 strikeouts and two walks. Outfielders Tiara Wells and Stephanie Duncan each made difficult running catches to help keep the shutout intact.

"We played very well today," Lamb said. "Everybody played well."

Said Shook: "(Lamb) makes our job easy."

Vanessa Osteen went 3-for-4 at the plate, with two RBI in the first game. In the second game, Shook paced the offense with four RBI, which included a two-run inside-the-park homer in the first inning. Owen broke open the game by scoring four runs apiece in the second and third innings.

Lamb added a double and two RBI, while Ashley Burpeau and Wells had two

hits and an RBI apiece. Melissa Ledford also had two hits. Shook said the Warlasses will be ready at 5:30 p.m. Saturday. They could play South Granville, the defending-state champion.

"We want to get it over in the first game," Shook said. "We don't want to be here any longer than we have to."

Lamb said she will be ready to go on the mound. "I'm not tired at all," she said.

Lamb's relief work key for Warlassies' comeback

◆ Owen from page C1

After a 40-minute break, the two teams went at it again. South Granville led 7-3 after four innings, but Owen tied the game on an RBI single by Wells and a two-run single by McGahey in the fifth.

Tournament MVP Jennifer Lamb (17-1), did not start on the mound, but she replaced Joann Vitalo in the fifth.

"Joann really came out and battled for us," said McElrath, whose ace, Lamb, needed her right arm rubbed down after the 12-11 loss. "We thought we give Jennifer a rest until the cooler weather came out."

South Granville went ahead 8-7 in the fifth, but Owen took the lead for good with five runs on five hits and an error in its at bat.

Melissa Ledford tied the game with an RBI single, then Laura

Padgett Owen up 10-8 on a two-run single.

The batter, Mary Williams, followed with a two-run home run over the fielder's head to make it 12-8.

The Vikings scratched out a run in the seventh, but that was it. Owen fled with 20 hits.

At the momentum pendulum swung in South Granville's favor in the eighth, McGahey

said there was never any doubt the team could muster a comeback. "If there's one thing about our team it's we're confident and give up," she said.

"All we need is one key hit everybody joins in. We had today."

Said Lamb, who had 25 outs and two two-hitters. "There's always a comeback. We always have that drive."

Warlassies advance in playoffs

Owen remains undefeated after Pisgah win

By Bob Williams
STAFF WRITER

The battle between two of Buncombe County's finest softball pitchers turned out in Owen's favor Tuesday night as the Warlassies avenged last year's playoff loss to Pisgah in extra innings with a 2-1 win.

Pitcher Jennifer Lamb led the Warlassie squad with a stellar 15 strike-out performance on the mound and kept the score an even 1 to 1 until the ninth inning. Lamb's teammate on the summer softball team, Pisgah's Ginger Thompson, was equally impressive on the mound, holding the Warlassie offense to one run until the ninth inning.

With the bases loaded in the ninth, Owen's Ashley Burbeau

run.

The win not only advanced Owen to the third round of the state playoffs, it defeated the Pisgah Sugar Bears, a team that ended Owen's playoff hopes last year after playing an 18-0 season.

"It's a great feeling," said Owen coach Dean McElrath after congratulating his team on their win. "We waited all year long to get back to playing Pisgah again because they upset us last year. This is an improved team this year."

With the win, the undefeated Warlassies (22-0) meet Forbush at home on Thursday at 5:15. Pisgah ended their season with a 14-5 record.

Owen scored its first run in the bottom of the second. Barbara Shook reached third on a

out to second.

The score remained Owen 1-0 until the top of the fourth inning when Pisgah's Ginger Thompson slapped a double to left with a runner on first to tie the game 1-1.

While weather conditions threatened, and delayed the game for 10 minutes, Lamb remained dominating on the mound, even as the rain began to drizzle toward the end.

"(Lamb) was super," said McElrath. "She did a great job. It's just a great win for our program because Pisgah comes to play. Owen no matter what their record, they always have."

But although she struck out 15 Pisgah batters, Lamb gave all the credit to her team.

"I could not do anything if it

ka, Owen look to bring home softball titles

By Sean Coughlin
STAFF WRITER

TOURNEYS

PLAYOFFS

Complex, Raleigh

SW Randolph (21-

Carteret or S.

(4) vs. Enka (19-5),

Wilson Hunt or S.
n.

Owen (23-0) begins play in the double-elimination 2-A semifinals Friday at 6 p.m. against Southwestern Randolph (21-3) at 6 p.m. The other two 2-A teams who advanced to Raleigh are East Carteret (17-6) and defending state champion South Granville (24-1-1).

Win or lose, the Warlassies will play another game Friday at 8.

"If we get a few breaks, I think we can win the whole thing," Owen coach Dean McElrath said. "We've very confident."

Owen is led by junior pitcher Jennifer Lamb (14-0, 73 ERA), last year's WNC Player of the Year.

Offensively, the Warlassies' lineup includes sophomore center fielder Tiara Wells (.486 BA) and senior first

baseman Barbie Shook (30 RBI).

Enka (19-5), which won the 1996 title, took second in 1994 and was third in '97, opens the 3-A semifinals Saturday at 12:30 p.m. against North Davidson (22-4). The Sugar Jets will play another game, win or lose, at 3. Wilson Hunt (21-3) and Southern Alliance (20-1) are the other two 3-A squads.

"We hit well and play pretty good defense," Enka coach Tim Miller said.

"We've got good pitching, too, and we've got good chemistry. I think we'll do OK."

Enka will count heavily on junior first baseman Miranda Byerly (.480 BA), sophomore pitcher Megan Luther (14-3) and senior second baseman Jessica Case, the Western Athletic Conference MVP.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FISHING VS. RAIT FISHING

Owen wins conference

From Staff Reports

After defeating Mitchell in a 79-54 rout last weekend, the Owen boys basketball team claimed the Western Highlands conference title and prepared to enter the playoffs as the number-one seed.

Jesse Gardner led the Warhorses to victory with 28 points, followed by Trey Hargrove who had 20. Seventeen of Gardner's 28 points were scored in the second half.

Owen travels to Hickory on Thursday where they will play a team to be announced at Catawba Community College.

Owen

◆ Continued from page D1

al seniors can go a long way. McElrath has seven of the latter.

"This is an old slow-pitch group," he said. "They've had to adapt to fast-pitch. This crowd's really had to work hard at it."

Lamb, the Western Highlands Conference Most Valuable Player, has worked overtime becoming one of the best young pitchers in Western North Carolina.

"She'll pitch on the weekends," McElrath said.

She used to just blow pitches by hitters. Now, she mixes up her pitches - a few inside, a few outside, some high, some low.

"She has speed and control," said Cook, whose team's lone hit was a sharply-hit fourth-inning single by senior Tara Thomas.

"She's awesome," Auten said of Lamb. "She pitches so fast."

Chase should serve as quite a test for Lamb and company. The Lady Trojans beat Owen last year in the second round, although the Warlassies were without ace pitcher Jenny McElrath, daughter of the coach, who was out with a case of mononucleosis. She now plays for Gardner-Webb.

This year could be different.

"We all really want it bad," Auten said of a 1-A/2-A state championship.

Along with Auten, Kim Sullins (3-for-3) and Davis (2-for-2) had big days at the plate for Owen. Davis, Sullins and Barbie Shook each had their team's other RBI.

Lamb keys Owen's first-round victory

By Sean Coughlin
STAFF WRITER

SWANNANOVA — It was another Owen victory Thursday. Another Lamb-asting.

Freshman pitcher Jennifer

Lamb allowed one hit and struck out 15 to lead

at Owen 6 Swain 2

the Warlассies to a 6-2 win over Swain County in the first round of the 1-A/2-A fast-pitch softball playoffs.

"She was the big difference," Lady Maroon Devils coach Sonya Cook said. "We've been practicing all week hitting some pitchers with speed. She was just good."

As dominant as Lamb was on a sunny spring day, the Warlассies (20-2) looked like possible upset victims until the fifth inning, as Swain, which switched from slow-pitch to fast-pitch this season, held a 2-1 lead.

The Lady Maroon Devils could not hit Lamb but played sound defense, and pitcher Miranda Laney kept the hosts off-balance with her pitching.

"It's harder to hit the slow (pitchers)," Owen senior left fielder Kamby Auten said. "It was scary."

The Warlассies soothed their fans' nerves in the bottom of the fifth when they erupted for four runs on four hits.

"I tried to get (my hitters) to be patient and wait a little bit more the last few innings," said Owen coach Dean McElrath, whose squad hosts Chase at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday in the second round.



DEBBIE CHASE-JENNINGS/CITIZEN-TIMES

SWANNANOVA — The Lady Maroon Devils could not hit Jennifer Lamb — who struck out 15 and allowed one hit — in Owen's 6-2 win over Swain Thursday.

Auten was one of several who listened. Her bases-loaded double in the fifth knocked home three runs to put Owen up 4-2.

"It was all strikes, bases loaded, two outs," Auten said, remembering her at-bat vividly. "I thought I was going to choke. I just listened to my coach."

Some good coaching and sever-

♦ See Owen on page C6

10-30-24

Hurricane Helene

Swannanoa, WNC

My name is Jeff Wilson and I decided to do a handwritten letter for Coach Dean McElrath's Hall of Fame reference letter. Western North Carolina was recently ravaged by Hurricane Helene. It was of generational devastation. It can crush a town, a ball park, a high school entrance and alot of our community. But it cannot crush the legacy of our community icon Dean McElrath.

Coach McElrath has a tremendous record in softball, including back

to back State AA Championships.
As the other reference letters attest to
he is a man of integrity and a
passion for his community and the
young people he served, grew and
developed. Thank you for considering
him for this lofty distinction.

In conclusion, I changed my letter to
this because this honor for Coach McElrath
would be for him and his community and
all of Western North Carolina for his 40
years of service, dedication and unprecedented
excellence. WNC could use some good
news and Coach Gene McElrath is
as good as it ever was in North
Carolina. He is a WNC legend and gentleman.
Sincerely
Jeff J. Wil

September 18, 2024

To Members of the NCHSAA Hall of Fame Selection Committee:

It is a great honor to write this letter of recommendation for Coach Dean McElrath. For any coach, induction into the NCHSAA Hall of Fame is one of the most distinguished honors that an individual can achieve for participation in North Carolina high school sports. Coach Dean McElrath is the perfect candidate for this prestigious induction.

In my tenure as the principal of Charles D. Owen High School, I had the opportunity to observe Dean McElrath's coaching abilities, as well as, his skills as a classroom teacher. Because he was an exemplary teacher, his students respected him and they consistently scored high on the state end-of-course tests. Coach McElrath's lesson plans and insistence on teaching the curriculum standards assured that his students were prepared to succeed.

Coach McElrath was a member of the NCHSAA for twenty-two years. During his storied coaching career, he coached football, basketball, and softball. He was the head coach of both mens varsity basketball and varsity womens softball at Charles D. Owen High School. In 1999 and 2000, his womens softball team won back-to-back state championships. Coach McElrath has received numerous 'coach of the year awards including Western Highlands Region Coach of the Year (1989, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001), National Federation Coaches Association 2000 Softball Coach of the Year, and the 2000 Asheville Citizen-Times Coach of the Year. Coach McElrath is also an inductee to the Charles D. Owen High School Hall of Fame.

Not only has Dean McElrath achieved tremendous success as a coach, but he has also served as an outstanding role model for the players that he has mentored. He has helped shape these athletes into outstanding young adults. Coach McElrath exemplifies the qualities that make him truly an asset to his profession.

In conclusion, as an educator for thirty plus years, I have been a teacher, an assistant principal, a principal (elementary, middle school, high school levels) an assistant superintendent, and a superintendent in both North Carolina and South Carolina. I have also served on the South Carolina State Board of Education both as a member and as the chairperson. I say all this because during my administrative experience, I have had the opportunity to observe and to work with many, many teachers and coaches. I would rank Coach Dean McElrath in the top one percent of all educators with whom I have worked. I strongly recommend Dean McElrath for induction into the NCHSAA Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Randolph', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Samuel Ivan Randolph, Ph.D.
sirandolph53@gmail.com