

MPTHs BOASTED OUTSTANDING COACHES DOWN THRU YEARS

Mount Pulaski Township High School has boasted of some fine coaches the past 30 years, some of them compiling outstanding successes, not only for Mount Pulaski but for the schools they latter coached.

Among the coaches within our memory who were outstanding here and at other schools, we think of the following:

George Dertinger

George Dertinger, who was coach here in the early 30's, did perhaps more than anyone to start Mount Pulaski high on a cage era that brought them statewide recognition that led to a berth in the Sweet Sixteen.

Dertinger, a newly-graduated coach from the University of Illinois, came here in 1930, winning the district championship from Lincoln. The following year Mt. Pulaski lost their two games to Lincoln. In 1932 they split with Lincoln. In 1933 a winning splurge over Lincoln really got under way and lasted for 10 years with only one loss in that period. Other coaches participating in that era were: Stanley, Halberg, Fletcher and Yates.

To Dertinger goes the credit for starting the Hilltoppers on a "big-time" schedule which included mostly Big 12 teams, or teams from much larger schools, dropping almost all county competitors and not entering Logan county tournaments. The school's record against Big 12 competition showed the locals winning a big majority of their games.

Dertinger went from here to Lewistown, Ill., a school that hadn't been a district winner in years. He won the district the first year, then went on to win a regional, then a sectional to go to the State. He was then employed by DeKalb on another step up and made a fine showing there.

Dolph Stanley

Dolph Stanley, who followed Dertinger, had the most fabulous record of any coach here. He came here in 1935, and with the momentum that had been built up through playing stronger competition, won the 1936 sectional from Lincoln to enter the Sweet Sixteen at Champaign. The team finished fourth. His team won the regional again the next year, but faltered against Springfield in the sectional. He went to Taylorville the following year and while there took an unbroken record of 45 games into the state tourney and went thru it to win the championship of the State. Later, he went into semi-bigtime by taking over coaching duties at Beloit College in Wisconsin. His teams there were conference champions and he grew in basketball fame. Later, he became athletic director at Drake University. He retired to private business, then took up coaching duties again at Rockford.

Leroy Halberg

Leroy Halberg then came on as coach here, and was here for two years, the second year they defeated Lincoln twice and that was the year Lincoln won the Big 12 championship. Halberg went to Feitshans high in Springfield and was there a number of years, doing a fine job.

Vergil Fletcher

Vergil Fletcher followed Halberg in 1940 and was here for one year and did a fine job. In fact, Pana outbid Mount Pulaski and he went there. From Pana, Fletcher went to Collinsville, where he has been for a number of years and his teams are listed among the top five in the state almost every year. He won the state championship this year, after having been a state tourney contender for several years, finishing second one year.

Arthur Yates, another Johnson City player, took over and was here for two years. He was followed by Carroll Wood, who was here for six years. His teams compiled some fine records until he was hired by Normal, where he coached a short time until retiring to a farm. Later, he came out of retirement and took over the job of coaching Bloomington

of the Big 12. Woody, who was a fine baseball player and played in the Three-Eye League for a while, gave Mount Pulaski high its finest baseball teams. They won the county championship four straight years and placed high in district and sectional play.

Frank Jones followed Woods and was here a couple of years. James Moore then came into the picture for a couple of years then went to Hartsburg-Emden.

Loren Dittus, an alumnus, who graduated from Western, where he had starred in both basketball and baseball, and had coached successfully at Beason, took over for three years, but stepped up to a finer position as baseball coach at Eisenhower high school in Decatur. He is now athletic director at Decatur High.

Harry Manes, another alumnus and graduate of Western, who had coached Elkhart to some fine teams, came to his alma mater in 1957, and resigned at the end of the 1960 season.

Jim Koch of Odin took over in the fall of 1960 with Don Olsen as assistant coach.

One coach at Mount Pulaski high never coached a single game for the local school. He was Clem Thompson of Mount Sterling, who after being hired, resigned before school opened. It was then that Vergil Fletcher became the new coach.

Other coaches that preceded Dertinger in 1931, were: Ken Conrey, Earl Beebe.

Decatur Respects Caliber of Cage Teams In 1933

(Feb. 2, 1933)

This is what the Decatur Review has to say about Mt. Pulaski's veteran team of hoopsters: "Down in Mt. Pulaski, a town of some 1,445 inhabitants, is a team which all Logan county is proud of, and rightly so, for this Mt. Pulaski township high school five has built up quite a record this season against a long list of strong opponents.

"One of the reasons for the great success enjoyed by Mt. Pulaski is Coach George Dertinger, University of Illinois graduate who came there in 1929. The other reason is a list of veteran basketball players, all of them juniors and seniors.

"Byron Blout, playing his fourth year on the squad, is one of the best prep players in this part of the state. Standing 6 foot 1 inch, this boy has established himself as a basket shooter of repute. He weighs some 175 lbs. and uses this weight to good advantage. He teams with either Roy Beckers, another senior, or Harold Anderson, a junior, who has been on the squad for three seasons.

"At center is Frederick Zimmermann, a tall boy who is also winding up his prep career this June. A tower on defense, Zimmermann has of late contributed largely to the point-making for the Mt. Pulaskians. Page Waddell, a senior; Harry Van Hook, junior, and John Connelley, sophomore, are the 3 guards who play.

"The townspeople of Mt. Pulaski are always behind the teams, and the Lincoln games are getting to be classics in themselves. A 27 to 20 victory is the achievement of Dertinger's 1932-33 team, over Lincoln, and the two schools are expected to clash again in the finals of the district tournament. All of Mt. Pulaski is anxious to add Decatur to the victim list Saturday night, and some 400 of its backers are expected to be in the armory stands when the two teams clash Saturday night."

The Hilltoppers whipped Decatur 25 to 18.

The latch-string is always out when you come to Mt. Pulaski. Next week the "door" will be wide open.

TIMES-NEWS GAVE BROADCASTS OF BASKETBALL IN 1933

(March 16, 1933)

Mt. Pulaski basketball fans who lacked the necessary capital, means of transportation or were unable to get to Lincoln, Saturday night for the district finals, took advantage of the next best bet and spent the evening at the local gym listening to a play by play telephone broadcast of the game.

The Times-News with the assistance of Kenneth Stoll and Joe Snyder, mechanical experts, who handled the receiving end and the amplification, were responsible for this new feature in giving fans an additional bit of service on the district finals.

Loren Harper, a former Springfield radio station announcer, did the preliminary garnishing of the broadcast and filled in the time outs and at the quarters and the half with the nice kind of things that one expects to hear over the air.

OTHER BROADCASTS OF GAMES DURING DEPRESSING '30's

The Times-News in cooperation with Kenneth Stoll, conducted a number of broadcasts of Hilltop out of town games that were of more than ordinary importance in the early 30's.

The Canton - Mount Pulaski game was broadcast from Canton with a play by play account given by the publisher, H. J. Wible. The reception here was at the high school, where Kenneth Stoll had improvised a receiving set that brought the game to the fans assembled in the gym.

The finals of the Pontiac tourney were broadcast back in the Schroth-Wagner era, the Pulaskians whipping all opposition easily until they had worn themselves out for the final game and Elgin defeated them badly.

Sectional games were broadcast from Decatur one year. A special soundproof booth was made with a glass front and just enough room for Bob Aitchison and the publisher to squeeze in. This booth was set on the floor at one end of the Decatur gym with telephone connections into the booth, and a play by play account given the folks back home. That was before the radio setup was giving that kind of coverage.

The Times-News even broadcast some games from the Lincoln gym for folks at home who couldn't make the trip or could not get into the crowded gym. Yep—those were the days of basketball hysteria in Mount Pulaski.

RENNER & STAHL MADE HISTORY FOR LOCAL NINE

(Oct. 6, 1932)

Old-timers here, remember the famous combination of Renner and Stahl, whenever baseball of the past is brought to light. "Jake" Stahl, as he was familiarly known, was a product of Elkhart, and caught many games for the local team. He made a wonderful record at the University of Illinois in baseball, and went up to the big leagues. He was manager of the Cincinnati Reds and Brooklyn Dodgers when they won pennants in successive years.

Guy Renner, who still resides in Mount Pulaski, also made quite a record. He was the "wiz" of pitchers in this section, and played two seasons with Dubuque and Rockford. One of his feats still talked about locally was when he pitched but 91 balls in a game against the Bloomington Unions, the regulation number of pitches being 137.

William T. Skinner, who taught in the high school here in the 1910 period, stated in a letter to the editor, Paul Beidler of the Weekly News, that of the 40 beginners entering the primary class at the grade school, only an average of 10 pupils were in the freshman class the past 10 years.

MOUNT PULASKI - LINCOLN CAGE RECORD COMPILED FROM 1925-1960

Basketball fans will want to preserve this record of cage games played with the Lincoln Rallies, their greatest rival down thru the years.

From 1926 through 1939 Mount Pulaski high teams had a big edge on the county seat team, winning 21 while losing only 8. In that period Mount Pulaski won 9 straight games under Dertinger and Stanley. Since that time the games were about even until 1956, the locals having won but one game. Coach Carroll Wood wound up his career here with four consecutive wins over Lincoln.

The biggest upset of recent years was when the Hilltoppers defeated Lincoln's finest team in 1951 by a 47-45 score on the local court. The Times-News issued a special edition that night, Believe It Or Not.

1925
Mount Pulaski 29; Lincoln 20

1926
Lincoln 15; Mount Pulaski 13
Mount Pulaski 16; Lincoln 14
—Conrey, Coach

1927
Mount Pulaski 29; Lincoln 28
(County Tournament)

1928
Mount Pulaski 21; Lincoln 16

1929
Lincoln 33; Mount Pulaski 11
Lincoln 25; Mount Pulaski 14
(District Tournament)

1930
Lincoln 24; Mount Pulaski 23
Mount Pulaski 18; Lincoln 16
(District Tournament)

1931
Lincoln 34; Mount Pulaski 17
Lincoln 18; Mount Pulaski 16
(District Championship)

1932
Mount Pulaski 33; Lincoln 31
(Double Overtime)

1933
Lincoln 24; Mount Pulaski 22
(District Championship)

1934
Mount Pulaski 27; Lincoln 20

1935
Mount Pulaski 25; Lincoln 21

1936
Mount Pulaski 22; Lincoln 14
Mount Pulaski 28; Lincoln 18
(Regional Championship)

1937
Mount Pulaski 32; Lincoln 17
(Sectional Championship)

1938
Mount Pulaski 53; Lincoln 14
Mount Pulaski 38; Lincoln 18
(Regional Championship)

1939
Lincoln 22; Mount Pulaski 21
Mount Pulaski 38; Lincoln 32
(Regional Championship)

1940
Lincoln 23; Mount Pulaski 21

1941
Mount Pulaski 43; Lincoln 27
Mount Pulaski 43; Lincoln 19
—Fletcher, Coach

1942
Mount Pulaski 36; Lincoln 34

1943
Mount Pulaski 37; Lincoln 35
Lincoln 36; Mount Pulaski 26
—Yates, Coach

1944
Lincoln 45; Mount Pulaski 23
Lincoln 40; Mount Pulaski 27

1945
Lincoln 38; Mount Pulaski 33
Lincoln 46; Mount Pulaski 41

1946
Lincoln 35; Mount Pulaski 34
Regional Finals, Mount Pulaski 44; Atlanta 28

1947
Mount Pulaski 51; Lincoln 29
Regional, Mount Pulaski 46; Lincoln 26

1948
Mount Pulaski 46; Lincoln 29
Regional, Mount Pulaski 39; Elkhart 43

1949
Mount Pulaski 49; Lincoln 36
Mount Pulaski 42; Lincoln 34
—Woods, Coach

1950
Lincoln 52; Mount Pulaski 34
1951
Mount Pulaski 47; Lincoln 45
Lincoln 59; Mount Pulaski 49
1952
Mount Pulaski 42; Lincoln 32
Lincoln 57; Mount Pulaski 55
—Jones, Coach

1953
Mount Pulaski 58; Lincoln 54
1954
Lincoln 41; Mount Pulaski 33
Lincoln 77; Mount Pulaski 61
—Moore, Coach

1955
Lincoln 54; Mount Pulaski 47
1956
Mount Pulaski 51; Lincoln 67
Regional Finals, Mount Pulaski 42; Lincoln 49

1957
Mount Pulaski 56; Lincoln 54
Regional Finals, Mount Pulaski 72; Lincoln 75

1958
Mount Pulaski 53; Lincoln 66
Regional, Mount Pulaski 56; Lincoln 69

1959
Mount Pulaski 48; Lincoln 50
Regional, Mount Pulaski 58; Lincoln 72

1960
Mount Pulaski 42; Lincoln 63

Lincoln Wins First Since 1931

(Jan. 9, 1941)

History was made here Tuesday night when for the first time since 1931, a Lincoln high school basketball team defeated a Hilltop squad, on the local court, winning by the decisive margin of 43 to 27.

The last Lincoln victory here in 1931, was a two to one score of 34 to 17, with such high school stars as Froschauer and Dehner, carrying Lincoln's torch that year.

If ancient history is at all consoling it will be recalled that in 1937 the Hilltoppers, coached by Dolph Stanley, rolled up a score of 54 to 16 against a weak Lincoln team. The sportsmanship of Coach Anderson deserves a bit of praise for he took his star player, Schweikert out at the start of the last period and later on substituted freely. Such was not the case in 1937 when the entire local first string was left in until the final seconds.

The two Hahn boys, Darrauld Staley, Harry Martin and Jack Zimmermann, formed the regulars that year.

MOUNT PULASKI WINS TRACK HONORS AT MEET

(May 19, 1932)

A large number from here attended the county track meet at Atlanta last Saturday, where they witnessed six new records in speed events.

Byron Blout of this city, showed a clean pair of heels to the entire field in the mile race, running it in the fast time of 4:52, breaking the old record of 5:15.

Other point winners from here were: Anderson, 3rd in the pole vault; Connelly won first in the high jump by clearing the bar at 5 feet 4 inches; Van Hook took second in the shotput and third in the discus throw.

High School 9 Won 4th County Championship

(Oct. 9, 1947)

Mount Pulaski high broke another county record Tuesday afternoon when their baseball team won the county championship for the fourth consecutive year, defeating Elkhart in what was the championship game, 7 to 6, on the Elkhart diamond.

Pulaski's string of wins was broken this season, the first loss in four years of play. New Holland turned the trick and with Elkhart being the only other team in the county to have lost only one game, the final game was set for the county honor.