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Dr. Will Hoffman

Press Release

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April 29, 2022

Dedication of J.C. Wallin Baseball Field and Jack Brown Press Box

Thursday, April 28th we honored two great men who dedicated their lives to the young people of Madison County. Their relentless pursuit of excellence and commitment helped them be successful in all facets of their lives. As we honor these gentlemen, it might help to remember some of what has gone before and the events that helped shape our lives. The things you are passionate about are not random, they are your calling. This field and this game...it's a part of our past.

John Carl (J.C.) Wallin-At 16, JC graduated from Laurel High School and worked for the Southern Railroad to make money to fulfill his dream of a college education. J.C. played baseball in college and graduated from Western Carolina University, embarking on a career in education that spanned over 36 years in Madison County. He held many titles-teacher, coach, principal, and many roles in the Central Office...eventually becoming the Associate Superintendent. His true love was coaching. In addition to leading several men's and women's basketball teams to undefeated seasons, he was most proud of the 1965 baseball team. He coached the first athletic team from Madison County to a State Championship. It is also the only Men's State Championship team. This team won their conference and entered the playoffs. The Mars Hill Wildcats won a thrilling game at Yadkinville to put them in the Semi-finals.

Ronnie Wallin told me the team came home to graduate. After the ceremonies at Mars Hill College, Coach Wallin told the team they had one hour to go home and get packed as they drove all night to Siler City to a motel where they slept for five hours and went on to Durham to play Grey's Creek.

Ronnie Wallin scored the only run, and a little 5'7" 140 pound sophomore, Stevie Davis pitched a no hitter with Rocky Grooms catching the gem winning 1-0. The Wildcats came home to play the best 2 out of 3 against Pantego at Mars Hill College.

Four days after pitching a no hitter, Stevie Davis pitched another to defeat Pantego 5-0. Not to be outdone, Charles Talley pitched a No Hitter the next day to secure the State Championship. They scored 10 runs with every member of the team contributing with a hit, run scored, or RBI. It was "Murder's Row" with Ronnie Wallin, Stevie Davis, Garland Hunter, Larry Hunter, Rocky Grooms, Charles Tolley, Gary Gardner, Don Clark, Bill Briggs, and Ron Chandler pounding the "Boys from Beaufort County." Coach taught these young men ideals and principles that helped them as they served our country in Vietnam. They became husbands and fathers living in Madison County. It's an extremely fitting and meaningful tribute to put J.C. Wallin's name on our baseball field.

Jack Brown graduated from Mars Hill High School in 1970. He idolized the 1965 team, as he was a 3- sport athlete. After graduating from UNC-A, he started his career at Hot Springs and moved to Madison High School in 1976 and became baseball coach. During his distinguished career, his teams won the 3A Ivy Conference Championship in 1982, 86, 87, 88, and 91. (Jack was quick to point out he couldn't have done this without great players.) State Playoffs-1982, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, and 92. Coach of the Year-1982, 86, 87, 88, and 91. He took his 1988 team deep into the Playoffs. He retired from coaching in 1992 with 211 victories. He began a new challenge as Assistant Principal and Athletic Director in 1992-98 at Madison High School. From 1998-2004, he was Principal at Hot Springs.

Jack was a teacher, coach, assistant principal, and principal. Whether he was on the diamond, in the classroom, or roaming the halls, he was touching generations of lives with his class. We are proud to honor Coach Jack Brown by dedicating the large structure behind home plate as the "Jack Brown Press Box." Congratulations Mr. Jack Brown!

Dr. Hoffman stated, "Too often, we don't take the time to explore our past and remember our own stories. J.C. Wallin and Jack Brown represent the legacy of two outstanding coaches and educators who helped our student athletes reach milestones and have a sense of success in their lives. It is important for all of us, especially our current student athletes, to hear these stories AND REMEMBER that our possibilities are also limitless and that we are a part of something very special here in Madison County."