

POWELL HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

1929 – 2012
COMPILED BY

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FOOTBALL

In 1929 three Powell High students went to Major Robert Neyland (Neyland wouldn't become a General until the 1940s) who was the head football coach at the University of Tennessee asking for gear which the U.T. team could no longer use. He agreed and contributed enough old uniforms and pads to outfit a team. Those enterprising students were: Cy Roberts, Joe Ivestor, and Ray Craig. The first football coach was Mr. A. G. Haworth. In 1929 the team played three games, losing all three. The next year they won three out of eight games. The team practiced and played on the grounds where the high school now stands on Emery Road. This continued until the WPA had finished excavating the field behind Powell School in the mid 1930's. Practices and home games could then be played on that field which was largely clay and rocks.

The 1939 team had 16 players from the first and second teams who were ruled ineligible due to grades which were too low or age which was too old.

There appears to have been no football team in 1945. Mr. J.T. Armstrong coached in 1946 and Mr. Haworth was back coaching in 1947.

At the start of the 1950's Mr. Norm Meseroll became football coach but in 1951 Mr. Kenneth Pruett and Mr. Bill Birchfield were the coaches. In 1952 Mr. John Clabo became coach. His 1953-54 team was undefeated. This was the first and only undefeated team in the history of PHS football. This record is a bit deceiving in that there was no District, Regional, or State playoffs in those days. The 1954-55 team was also very good with nine wins and two losses.

Mr. Earl Hoffmiester became football coach in 1956 followed by Coach Henson in 1959. Coach Hoffmiester was Knox County Coach of the Year two of the four years he coached. The 1962-63 record of Coach Henson was 9 wins 1 loss and one tie. His 1963-64 record was 9 wins with 2 losses and his 1971-72 team went 9 wins with 2 losses and the Knox County Championship.

In 1976 Mr. John Elkins became head football coach at PHS. A new football field was created in 1977-78. Coach Elkins' team in 1979 and again in 1980 had a record of 7 wins and 3 losses. The 1980-81 team went to a bowl game.

Mr. Bill Henson returned as head football coach in 1982. In 1984 Mr. Jack Henderson became head coach and in 1986 Mr. Clark Duncan was named head football coach.

Coach Duncan's team in 1989 had a record of 9 wins and 2 losses and went to the first bowl game since 1981. The 1990 team had a 10 and 0 regular season then won the District 2 AA championship but lost in the regional.

Clark Duncan was the Knoxville Football League Coach of the Year and Preston Littlejohn was KFL Player of the Year in 1990. In 1991 the team had 11 wins and 3 losses. They won the District 2AA and Regional championship. In 1992 the record was 12 wins with 3 losses and also District championship winner. In 1993 the record was 8 wins and 4 losses with second place in the Region. The record in 1994 was 10 and 3. In 1995 the team had another great year advancing to the second round of the District play-offs before loosing. The 1996 team went 8 and 4 and the 2002 team record was 9 and 3.

Mr. Larry Stephens became head coach in 2003 followed by Mr. Matt Lowe in 2006. Thus began another run of outstanding teams starting with a 9 and 3 record in 2008-2009. The 2010 team was 10 and 0 in the regular season before losing in the second round of the play-offs. The 2011-2012 team also had a 10 and 0 regular season and won the District and Regional championships. The team lost in the State championship game by 3 points. Final record for the year was 14 - 1.

Coach Matt Lowe played football for PHS graduating in 1995. He had a coaching record of 49 wins and 23 losses over 6 seasons and was the KFL Football Coach of the Year for the 2011-2012 season. He resigned as coach of PHS football in February 2012. Football has been very strong since the 1960's.

In spring of 2012 Mr. Derek Rang was named head football coach at PHS. Prior to this Mr. Rang was a defensive coordinator at West High School in Knoxville.

PHS has had many outstanding football players. Knowing many will be left out which is most unintentional the following are players who received county, district, regional, state and other recognition: Shirley Burgin 1953, John Cooper 1955, Jim Courtney 1964, John Bruhin, Mike McComby 1971, Danny Oliver 1995, Donnie Walker, Jared McGaha, Devin Collins, Frank Milligan, Baron Huber, Kier Houston, Jordan Allen 2007, Austin Smith 2010, Austin Benson 2010 and Dy'shawn Mobley 2012.

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Basketball was played outside on a dirt court until the 1930's when the gym was built. The coach for basketball was Mr. A.G. Haworth from the first team through 1945. There apparently was no team in 1945-1946 but in 1946-1947 Mr. J.T. Armstrong was the coach. Mr. Haworth was coaching in 1948-49. Mr. Norm Meseroll coached in the early 1950's followed by Mr. Ken Pruett and Mr. Bill Birchfield in 1952. Mr. John Clabo was the coach starting in 1952. In 1955 the team had a record of 29 wins and 2 losses and was the Sixth District champion. Mr. Bill Henson was the coach in 1956 followed by Mr. Gerald Oliver in 1958. Mr. James Prince became coach in 1959. The 1963-64 season record was 27 wins and 4 losses.

In 1968 Mr. Jeff Hunter became the head basketball coach. In 1969-1970 the team record was 19 wins with 3 losses and winner of: Knox County championship, District 7 championship, Region 4 championship, Sub-State championship, and placed fourth in the State Tournament. The 1971-72 team won the Knox County Basketball Tournament and the 1974-1975 team was again Knox County Tournament champion as well as the sixth District Tournament Champs. Coach Hunter lead the 1976-

1977 team to a 22 and 11 record, second place in Knox County, District 4 AA champs, second place in Region 2 AA, Sub-State champ and into the State Tournament. The 1978-1979 team took fourth place in the District 4 AA tournament, runner-up in the Sub-State and played in the State tournament. That team did not win a district game but was able to go to the regional tournament because there were only four teams in the district and four teams from the district automatically went to regional. The team won the regional and sub-state tournaments but lost in the first round of the state tournament.

In the early 1980's PHS was undergoing remodeling and enlargement. The gym had been reconfigured to become the cafeteria, forcing the basketball team to practice and play its' "home" games in the old Karns High School gym. A new gym was part of the addition at PHS so that in the 1984-1985 school year the team would be able to play on their home court after one and one half years playing at Karns. Play was slated to return to the new gym after Christmas but a large water pipe in the gym froze in 25 degree below zero weather. The pipe ruptured and flooded the new gym and that end of the school. A new floor buckled and could not be used. The team was back in the old Karns High School gym.

A few years later the gym, finished in 1985, was named the Jeff Hunter Gymnasium to honor him for his many years of successful coaching.

The 1986-1987 team was 22 and 8, District 3AA runner-up, Region 2AA runner-up and played in the State tournament. Two years later the 1988-1989, team was District 3AA champ, Region 2AA champ, Sub-State champ and played in the State Tournament. The 1991-1992 team was District 3 AA runner-up Region 2 AA runner-up and played in the Sub-State with a record of 20 and 10. The 1992-1993 team had a record of 21 and 6.

Mr. Mike Ogan became head coach in 1993, the team record was: 22 and 9, Region 2 AAA runner-up and played in the Sub-State. The student body had grown to a point that the teams at Powell were moved up to AAA from AA making stiffer competition. In the 2005-2006 school year the team went 24 and 14 , was District 3 AAA champs, Region 2 AAA runner-up and played in the Sub-State. The next year the team had a still better year with a 25 and 10 record, District 3 AAA champs, Region 2AAA champs, Sub-State champs and played in the State Tournament.

Coach Mike Ogan accomplished a great deal in basketball first as a player at PHS then Carson Newman College, where he was All-American, and as a coach at PHS. The boys' basketball program has three teams: Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman teams with a separate coach for each.

Fully aware that names of excellent basketball players from PHS will be left out, especially from earlier years of the school, this is a partial list of players recognized by the county, district, region and/or state. Bud Lewis 1963, Jerry Cannon 1961, Larry Stooksberry 1965, Mark Craft, Mike Ogan 1970, Lee Roberts 1993, Issac Conner 1994, Dexter Conner 1996, Matt Mercer 1997, Chris Conner 2007, Jason Seymore 2008 and Andrew Green.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

The first girls' basketball team was in the early 1930's. Evelyn Anthony was coach even though she didn't know anything about basketball. She got a basketball book to use as a guide. Zenobia Jones was basketball coach for the girls in 1937-1938 and probably 1938-1939. Mr. A. J. Haworth was coach in

1939-1940 continuing until 1947. There apparently was no girls' basketball team in 1946-1947. Mr. Haworth coached in 1947-1948, Aaron Pratt coached in 1948-1949 and Norm Messeroll coached in the early 1950's. Ken Pruett and Bill Birchfield coached in 1951-1952 and John Clabo started coaching in 1952-1953. By 1954 the girls had won the district championship three years in a row. Leola Hodge began coaching in 1956-1957 and continued until 1965 except for one year in the early 1960's when Mr. J. Earl McCall was coach. Sandra Headrick became head coach in 1965-1966 after serving as assistant coach for a few years.

In 1967-1968 the Knox County School Board ended KIL girls' basketball programs county wide because of the expense, especially the cost of transportation. Girls' basketball was restored as a KIL sport county wide in 1974, allegedly because of a law suit either filed or threatened by a gentleman in the Halls area against the school board. He had a daughter who was a good basketball player and he wanted her to be able to play KIL basketball in high school. Title nine had become law in 1972 mandating equal male and female athletic programs. This law forced the school board to reinstate KIL girls' basketball. After reinstatement, the KIL rules changed to full court play. Prior to this time girls played half court three on three...three offensive players on one half court and three defensive players on the other half court. A player could not cross the center line.

When Powell girls' basketball returned as a KIL sport in the 1974-1975 school year the new coach was Ron Martin. He was followed by Mike Hinton as head coach in 1976. Nancy Lovett became coach in 1978 followed by Rick Walker in 1979. His team in 1981-1982 had a record of 32 wins and 4 loses, winning District Championship and Regional Runner-Up. Coach Walker was named KIL Coach of the Year. Next year his team was 33 and 8, winning District Championship and Regional Championship but losing in State Semi-Finals.

PHS was under construction in 1983-1985 with remodeling and additions which included conversion of the gym into a cafeteria and constructing a new gym. The basketball teams practiced and played their "home" games at the old Karns High School Gym. Teams were able to play in their new gym the later part of the 1984-1985 season.

The 1986-1987 team was first in the District, Champions of the Region and Sub-State, played in the State tournament, and had a record of 36-1. Again in 1989-1990 the team won: the KIL, District 3 AA championship, Regional 2 AA runner-up, and played in the State Tournament. Coach Walker's 1992-1993 team went 28-6, and won the District and Regional Championships. The next year the team was second in the District.

Jud Teague became head coach in 1994 followed by Clay Young in 1995. The 2003-2004 team had a record of 35 and 5, were District 3AAA co-champs, District 3 AAA Tournament runner-up, Region 2 AAA and sub-state champions and played in the State Tournament. The next year the record was 28 and 8, District 3 AAA Co-Champions, District 3AAA and Region 2 AAA Tournament champions, Sub-State Champions, and played in the State Tournament. 2005-2006 team was 21 and 12, District 3 AAA Tournament Champs, Region 2AAA Runner-up, Sub-State Champions, and played in the State Tournament. Next year the team record was 25 and 7, District 3 AAA regular season Champions, District 3 AAA Tournament Champions, Region 2 AAA runner-up, and lost in the State Tournament. In 2008-2009 the team record was 22 wins and 11, District 3AAA tournament champ, Region 2 AAA runner-up, Sub-State Champ, and lost in the state tournament.

Girls' basketball is composed of two teams, Varsity and Junior Varsity. Girls' teams have been strong year in and year out with many of the young ladies going on to play at the next level. Coach Clay Young played basketball at PHS, later at Lincoln Memorial University and was head coach of PHS girls' basketball for 17 years. His teams have won more than 260 games. They had played three consecutive years in the class AAA State Tournament (2004-2006) and another in 2009. Coach Young was PREPXTRA Girls' Basketball Coach of the Year for the 2004-2005 season and KIL Basketball Coaches' Association Girls' Coach of the Year in 2003. Coach Young resigned as basketball coach at PHS in April 2012.

A few of the outstanding girls' basketball players at PHS are: Tracy Mays 1978, Carrie Harper 1995, Catlin Hollifield 1997, Autumn Shoffner 1998, and Erin Ogan 2005.

Bart Walker, a 1987 graduate was hired in May 2012 as head girls' basketball coach. He played basketball at Walters State Community College, then Lincoln Memorial University. He coached at several junior colleges before taking two years off to be a father. Catlin Hollifield, a PHS graduate, was hired as coach Walker's assistant.

BASEBALL

When trying to find out when baseball started at PHS, the answer seems to be, "We have always had baseball." In early years the games were with community teams and were played on a field on the south side of Beaver Creek because there was no suitable land near the school for a baseball field. There was a log foot bridge to cross the creek. In the 1930's the WPA excavated a field behind the school, next to the gym. This was done with pick, shovel and wheelbarrow. There was a little grass in the outfield, but most of the field was red clay and rocks. Now the games could be played at the school. The first coach apparently was A.G. Haworth who joined the faculty in 1927. He continued to coach until 1949 or 1950, except for one or two years when he was not on the faculty.

Norm Meseroll became coach in 1949 or 1950. Kenneth Pruett and Bill Birchfield were the next coaches. There was and is a conflict between spring football and spring sports including baseball. The student body was small in the 1950's with a limited number of good athletes. By the 1960's baseball was recognized to a greater extent. Charles Pope was coach.

Coach Danny Maples' 1981 team won the district championship. The team won: Regional championship in 1983, District championship in 1984, District and Regional championship in 1985, District championship in 1986, and Regional championship in 1987 with a record of 24 wins and 7 losses. The team continued to play well with a record of 26 and 5 in 1988, and 22 and 8 in 1989 when they won the District championship.

The baseball team went as far as the state play-offs in 1993, had a record of 20 and 5 in 1994, and 22 and 6 in 1995. Cale Lawson led the 2001 team to a record of 29 and 0.

When PHS was built in 1948-1949 there was a baseball field, however in 1991 \$30,000.00 was spent to construct a baseball field worthy of pride by the team and school. PHS has a long history of good to excellent baseball teams and aspires to continue the reputation.

OTHER SPORTS

FFA BASKETBALL

Mr. H.J.Fowler became a part-time faculty member at PHS in 1932. He soon became full time and taught for thirty three years. He taught agricultural sciences and related subjects. He also organized the FFA or Future Farmers of America club. "Fessor" Fowler coached the FFA basketball teams until the mid-1950's.

TRACK AND FIELD AND CROSS-COUNTRY

A track team was fielded in 1954 coached by John Clabo. Cross-country followed a few years later. Kenneth Hume was coach for track and cross-country for most of the 1960's. In 1984 the cross-country team had it's best year up until that time. In 1987 cross-country had 17 wins. The boys' cross-country was second in the regional meet and tenth in the state in 1991. The girls' cross-country team was also second in the regional meet and eighth in the state. In 1993 the boys' and girls' teams were regional runners-up.

BOWLING

The bowling teams for boys and girls were organized in 1965.

SWIM TEAMS

Boys' and Girls' swim teams were organized in the 1960's.

GOLF TEAMS

The golf teams were organized in the later 1960's for both boys and girls. They have a history of winning about two-thirds of their matches. In 1992 Leslie Vaughn was District and Regional champion. In 1993 the girls' golf team went to the state tournament and the boys' golf team was third.

TENNIS

Tennis was begun around 1970 and was sponsored by Mr. A.B. Bell. Soon there were teams for both boys and girls. This sport was discontinued in 1978 and reintroduced in 1990. It was sponsored by Mr. Dan Foster.

TITLE IX

In 1973 girls' softball, basketball, track and volleyball were played but not as KIL sports. Title IX became law in 1972 requiring equality in male and female sporting opportunities. In the next few years, designation of the teams were mandated to change and girls' sports became KIL sanctioned sports.

GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

The girls' volleyball team in 1969-1970 was 8 and 0 in the district. In 1982, Nancy Lovett was Coach of the Year for volleyball. The team was 32 and 8 including 17 and 1 in the district in 1983-1984 school year. In 1993 the volleyball team was district runner-up. The 1993-1994 team went 23 and 9.

GIRLS' SOFTBALL

Softball became a KIL sport in mid to later 1970's. The 1986 team was district and regional champions and the 1988 team had a record of 22 wins and 7 losses. The next year the team went 38 and 6 and won regional championship. Bill Thomas coached the 1990 team to a record of 30 and 2 and won the class AA state title. The 1991 team was 34 and 1. By 1993 the softball team had been in the state tournament five of the previous six years. The 1994 team was district champ and the 2000 team had a record of 37 and 17 with district 3 AAA championship, region 2 AAA championship and played in the state tournament. Softball has been a strong sport at PHS with an impressive winning record. Some of the outstanding softball players: Christin Rolins, Christa Shaw, 1990, Kristi Briant 1997, Nikki Sexton 2000, Cyndi Weaver, Cassidy Skeen 2006, and Erica Hale 2007. I apologize to all those whose names were not listed. There is no slight intended.

DANCE TEAM

Dance team began in 1990-1991. The dance team sponsor was Britney Turner.

SOCCER

Soccer was organized as a team sport around 1981 but, was not a sanctioned sport until 1986-1987. Girls' soccer began in the 1993-1994 school year.

ROCK CLIMBING

The rock climbing team was formed in 1997, and has been increasingly popular for both boys and girls.

CHEERLEADING

Cheerleading began at PHS about 1940 when Powell was playing Young High School in football for the county championship. It was planned that a few of the students would lead cheers, but there was no actual team. By the mid-1940's there was a team of three cheerleaders with matching dress that functioned as an early uniform. The team grew in number and a formal uniform was adopted. The cheers have become more complex with gymnastic moves which require strength, agility, and stamina. This defines an athlete and cheerleading as a sport. In the last several years the number of students on the cheerleading squads has greatly increased. There is a varsity squad, a junior squad, and a freshman squad for both football and basketball games.