Bias charge hits Dunbar athletics

Director appointment triggers controversy

By Sam Lacy
AFRO Sports Editor

A situation described as "utter chaos" by the former director looms as a distinct threat to Dunbar High School athletics, once among the more envied programs in the Maryland Scholastic Association.

The problem began with the retirement last June of William "Sugar" Cain as Dunbar's athletic director. It peaked this week with the takeover by his successor, Robert "Bob" Wade.

* * *

In between were a series of alleged broken promises, denials and apparent misunderstandings. One observer implies political interference.

And locked in the middle are two men: Wade, with relatively no teaching experience beyond the junior high level, and Arlene Lewis, who for the past 23 years had serves as top assistant to sain in the Dunbar program.

Together, Cain and Lewis had led the Poet varsity teams to nine football and five basketball titles in addition to numerous junior varsity championships.

Wade was appointed to the post despite the fact that Cain urgently recommended the selection of Lewis. But, not only was Lewis bypassed for the department directorship, he was transferred to a junior high school classroom as well.

* * *

A bitter Lewis was reluctant to discuss the matter when contacted by the AFRO. Except to confirm that he had been bypassed in favor of a man with far less experience, and that he had been ordered to report to the Lombard Junior High School, the 56-year-old former coach refused to comment on his obvious disappointment.

Not so Cain.

Sugar, one of most highly respected educators in the public school system, and an acknowledged coaching genius, called the turn of events at Dunbar unfortunate.

He asserted that the shelving of Lewis and "what they did to Irvin Locust has everyone mad over there. I hate to say it but the things that occurred have left the department in utter chaos."

The principal, Mrs. Julia Richardson Woodland, later denied that chaos or that partiality was exercised in the naming of Wade.

Sugar Cain
recommendation ignored

* * *

But to continue Cain's comments: "Archie had been a faithfull assistant for 23 years," he said. "He had weathered all the storms of a difficult situation right along with me and had become thoroughly familiar with the pattern of operation.

"When he resigned as basketball coach last spring, it was, in our minds, a first step in preparation for assuming the director's duties. The philosophy in our field today is that the main job of the athletic director is supervision of the over-all program and of the various coaches on the staff. He has no time to devote to coaching.

"That, as much as anything else, was what Archie Lewis had in mind when he gave up the head basketball post," Cain declared.

* * *

"When the time came for my retirement decision, Lewis and I went in to talk to Mrs. Woodland. I presented the names of Wade and Charlie Moore as candidates to fill the vacancy created by my departure, firm in the belief that Lewis would succeed me as the director."

Both Wade and Moore are Dunbar graduates. The former played under Cain in 1962-63, and the latter was a member of the Poets teams of 1956-57.

"When we left the meeting with the principal," Cain went on, "we were convinced that the logical scheme of progression would be followed and Archie would step up to the directorship. Toward that end, I held daily sessions with him explaining the intricacies of the massive paper work connected with the administration of the department.

"Two months later, when I read in the newspaper that Robert (Wade) had been appointed director, I was stunned. I'm sure Lewis must have been also.

* * *

"Moreover," Cain continued warming even more to his subject, "the job they did on Irving Locust was demeaning, to say the least.

"Locust was the greatest football coach Dunbar ever had. He belongs there. For the past several years, he has done an outstanding job with the freshmandsophomore and junior varsity programs.

"It seemed clear-out to me that he would move up to the varsity football coaching position, and he felt similarly certain. He even went so far as to report early this fall and give out uniforms and conduct the pre-season practice.

* * *

"Irving did what we have had to do at Dunbar for the past 15 years. In that area, dealing with those kids, you have to virtually beg them to attend school. You then havé to motivate them and keep motivating them.

"It is not an easy thing to do, and it took Archie and myself a long time to convince them of the value of education. I'm not too sure the new people are going to have the patience or that the youngsters will respond," the ex-teacher said, a note of sadness in his voice.

"Anyway, after Locust had endured the sweat of preparing and pruning the football group, what do you think happened? Wade came in and told him he is going to be the football coach."

* * *

In a letter to the AFRO, James M. Griffin, former vice president of the School Board, implied that the upset state of affairs at the school are due to political intervention.

Griffin, who is himself a Dunbar alumnus, claims that the choice of Wade would not have come about except for intrusion by political forces which succeeded in ousting Dr. Roland Patterson as school superintendent.

* * *

Asked about the various allegations, Dunbar principal Woodland emphatically denied that any degree of misrepresentation or favoritism entered into the Wade appointment.

"Mr. Wade was one of seven applicants interviewed for the position," she told the AFRO. "It was the collective evaluation of a panel of nine persons that his qualifications were the best in the lot."

This panel is comprised of the principal, a representative of the performing arts department, two persons from the community, one from the community school component, the director of the multi-purpose program, two assistant principals and one department head, according to Mrs. Woodland.

She added that appointment to the athletic directorship is a principal's prerogative. She declared that longevity in a situation has little to do with a person's fitness and that there are certain characteristics in an applicant that influence the final selection.

Does this suggest that Mr. Wade has more of these characteristics than Mr. Lewis? "In the view of the panel, yes."

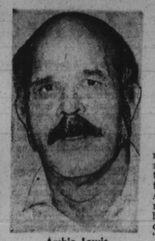
Mrs. Woodland further pointed out that "while an outgoing person has the right to make a recommendation, it does not always mean that the recommendation will be followed, that was the case in this (Lewis) situation."

* * *

Questioned about the transfer of Lewis to the junior high school level, Mrs. Woodland insisted that this is not to be construed as a demotion.

She said that, under the new HEW guidelines it is required that certain schools give up some teachers in order to conform with the desegregation ration.

"Mr. Lewis' transfer may not be a permanent thing," she said. "When the reorganization process is completed, we may get him back."



Archie Lewis
he was bypassed

Principal Woodland
her prerogative

Former grad blames politics

James MM Griffin, a former member of the Baltimore City School Board, typifies the citizen reaction that has reached the AFRO since the announcement that Robert Wade had been named to succeed the retired William "Sugar" Cain as athletic director at Dunbar High Schoolm

sA product of East Baltimore and an alumnus of Dunbar, Griffin expressed strong disapproval of the selection of the relatively inexperienced Wade over Archie Lewis, who had been Cain s chief lieutenant for the past 23 years:

pick up from 'Dear AFRO"

Dear AFRO:

I was astonished to read of Robert Wade's appointment to athletic director at Dunbar High school in the AFRO last week.

Since I can remember as a boy in East Baltimore when we could only attend Dunbar, Carver and Douglass High Schools, any physical education teacher and coach had to pay his dues and work his way through the ranks before being appointed head coach and athletic director.

Once a teacher made head coach it was still a struggle and more time and sacrifice involved before he could become an athletic director

When integration came in the 50's, black physical education teachers had more opportunities to work as assistant coaches in some of the predominantly white schools, but head coaching positions were still limited for black people to the predominantly black schools.

Over the past four years, former superintendent, Dr. Roland N. Patterson tried to eliminate politics and friendship from educational appointments and made appointments based on qualification.

Under his administration Mr. Robert Wade, an assistant coach for only a short period of time and no head coaching experience would not have been appointed over Archie Lewis, a devoted teacher and coach at Dunbar for many years. (Incidentally, Mr. Lewis is without a coaching assignment after over twenty years in coaching at this point and time.)

Mr. Wade would probably not have been made head football coach over Irvin Locust, who has proved he can do the job of coaching by producing championship wrestling teams at Dunbar, as well as coaching Junior Varsity football for several years. It is hoped that the acting superintendent of personnel will bring this atrocity to the attention of the Personnel Committee of the School Board

Grover McCrea, a 1950 graduate of Dunbar and present member of the Personnel Committee of the Board, should use influence to reject this appointment.

Mrs. Thelma Cox, Region II superintendent, should also use her influence and have Mr. Wade removed from the head football coach and athletic directorship at Dunbar.

If this groosly unfair appointment is allowed to remain our school system will regress into the 1920's when City Hall controlled school appointments.

The unjust and illegal firing of Dr. Roland Patterson is paving the way for intrusion of politics and corruption back into the personnel appointment system of our Baltimore public schools.

(Editor's note: The writer is James M. Griffin, former vice president and member of the Baltimore City School Board.)

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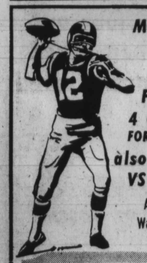

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Man feted on retiring

MARION, S.C. — Main Street store persons and dozens o f relatives and friends were on hand for an appreciation party for Jefferson Pee, retiring from Marion National Bank, where he started 33 years ago as custodian and courier.

Pee became known around Marion as he pedaled his bicycle, carrying around checks to Main Street merchants as a p...

The 62-year-old Pee was presented with a board of directors proclamation and plaque, a new television, rocking chair and a refurbished edition of his job bike.

He was also given a lunch — his first since 1942. He explained that before, he had always been busy during the lunch hour.

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TROPHY WINNERS — Finishing at the top of the competition in the intermediate doubles at the Druid Hill Tennis Clinic, were, left to right: runners-up Sherry Bynum and Bernadette Harris and champions Kim Paddison and Linda Cellozzi. They were among 300 local youngsters who received instructions in the 6-week program sponsored by the Junior League of Baltimore in conjunction with the Department of Recreation.

Tomorrow will tell: Taylor on eve of Bears' opener

By Sam Lacy

"We're a young club, but I think we're coming around. Tomorrow will tell the story, though."

That is the way Morgan State University football coach Nat Taylor reacted to questions about his 1975 team which debuts tomorrow (Saturday) against Virginia State College at Hughes Stadium.

"It is generally known that we lost a lot of starters from last year's team, including the core of our backfield," Taylor went on, "but I think we may have some promising replacements for them."

Both running backs, Mike Collier and Bob Hammond, were graduated, and both are doing well in NFL lineups during the pros' pre-season.— Collier with the Steelers and Hammond with the Giants.

"I've been pleasantly surprised by the work of two local youngsters," said Taylor. "Daryl Spence of Edmondson and Lloyd McCleave of Kenwood, have come along fast enough to make one a little optimistic there. Of course, it is going to take a little time for either or both to mature, but I'm hopeful."

* * *

In all probability, the bulk of responsibility in the offensive line will rest on the shoulders of Dan McClary (Dundalk) at center, James Brooks and Joe Labrie at guards, and William Lighty and Rich Wiley at tackles.

Lighty, a junior, and Wiley, a sophomore, are from Pennsylvania.

Two more local products figure to be in the starting lineup against the visiting Trojans. They are fullback Jesse Moore from Forest Park High, and end Michael Palmer from Edmondson.

* * *

The task of rebuilding the defense which lost a superb linebacking corps led by Gene "Superman" Simms, is a big one, Taylor admits.

But a couple of real "finds" may have surfaced in the persons of Elvis Franks, a 6-5, 225-pound end from Doucette, Texas, and Daryl Wilson, an agile cornerback from Poly.

* * *

Opening against Virginia State is a radical departure from the norm. But the switch of the annual Bears-Trojans game from its usual end-of-season position was dictated by formation of the new Mid-Eastern Athletic Association (MEAC).

With Morgan out of the CIAA, Virginia State had to commit its late-November scheduling to Johnson C. Smith.

Nat Taylor
'we're coming around'

MSA football

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Druid tennis sessions lured 300 youngsters

The Junior League of Baltimore closed out its six-week tennis clinic at Druid Hill Park with the crowning of 14 champions.

The program was co-sponsored by the league and the Department of Recreation.

Headed by Junior League president Mrs. Frederick DeKyper and clinic chairperson, Mrs. Louis Hargrave, the league funded the ambitious project through its community trust fund.

Because of it, more than 300 youngsters were exposed to tennis.

In addition to the five paid professional instructors (including director) there were more than 20 volunteers, who received private instruction from Lew Gerrard.

He generously gave six hours of free instruction to the volunteers before they began the Clinic.

Community support was reportedly overwhelming from businessmen and private citizens.

Each child received a racket for $1 and a certificate denoting that he/she had successfully completed the six weeks, the latter was through the courtesy of Greiner and Co. Handsome trophies, donated by Princeton Sporting Goods and Bare Hills Tennis Club, were awarded to the tournament winners and runners-up in addition to Oriole sweat shirts to members of the beginners class.

* * *

Because of the large attendance, the league did not have enough rackets and sought help from the public through the following sporting goods stores, Bacharach, Brooks Robinson, Triangle, Princeton and Totally Tennis and private indoor and outdoor clubs. The result surpassed the goal.

The Maryland Lawn Tennis Association gave its advice, support and donated balls, as did Bare Hills Tennis Club. The White Rose Paper Co. provided the draw sheets and necessary writing paper.

The various class champions were:

Boys' beginners, John Archer; boys intermediate singles, Vernon White; boys intermediate doubles, Jody Spurrier and William Butler; boys advanced singles, Brian Peterson; boys advanced doubles, John and Jimmy Spurrier.

Girls' beginners, Angela Ham; girls' intermediate singles, Chirlaine Stram; doubles, Kim Paddison and Linda Celozzi; girls' advanced singles, Jackie Low; doubles, Leslie Griffin and Donita Hill.

Black coach stunned by supporter's charge

Bill Cofield says Bill Wilson shouldn't have done it.

Cofield is an assistant coach at the University of Virginia, who was a candidate for the basketball head coaching jon at the University of Minnesotam He didn't get it.

Wilson is the Minnesota commissioner of human rights who charged last week that racial discrimination was involved in the decision to bypass Cofield in favor of a white applicant.

Early this week, Cofield declared: "I was very surprised and a bit numb.

"The only way I could comment on a discrimination charge would be if I could look into (Minnesota Athletic Director) Paul Giel's head and see what was there," said Cofield. "He treated me fine when I was there (for

Wilson said he filed the charge because of "What appears to be reliable information" from people close to the selection process.

Giel made the final selection of a new coach after receiving three names from a six-member search committee.

Cofield was the only black man recommended. He was unanimously endorsed by the committee. Jim Dutcher, an assistant coach at the University of Michigan, received five votes and the other candidate got four.

Dutcher was hired by Giel, a decision the Board of Regents will be asked to confirm at their net meeting later this month.

Giel said that Cofield's race had nothing to do with thr decision.

He said he picked Dutcher because he was familiar with the Big Ten and Minnesota basketball players, and because of his experience in recruiting athletes in our "natural area," which includes Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin.

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Ex-Morgan star buried in Penna.

Funeral services were held Saturday in Chester, Pa., for Russell Sterling, one of the first of a long line of nationally-known track and field stars from Morgan State College/University.

Sterling, dash champion of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) in the late 1920's, set records in the 100 and 220 at the Penn Relays and Boston Garden.

Attending the final rites were former Morganties Al-Cottman and Samuel Turpin, representing the "M" club, of which Sterling was a longtime active member.

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