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UA1F WKU Archives Vertical File - William "Red" McCrocklin

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W. R. T. L. *Alumni*

11/4/43

THE COURIER-JOURNAL, LOUISVILLE, KY



McCrocklin Eligible for Wings

Cadet William "Red" McCrocklin, an all-American basketball player at Western State Teachers College and later assistant basketball coach at du Pont Manual, soon will be graduated from the Air Force Advanced Flying School at Stockton Field, Calif. He will be commissioned a second lieutenant and will be given the coveted wings. "Red" is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. McCrocklin, 311 S. Western Parkway, Louisville.

McCROCKLIN, WILLIAM

January 29/1944

THE COURIER-JOURNAL, LOUISVILLE, SATURDAY MORNING, JAN 29, 1944



C.-J. Photo.

A NEW PIN-UP GIRL for Lieut. William "Red" McCrocklin, Army pilot stationed in the European theater of war, is 6-pound 9-ounce Barbara Jo, born to Mrs. McCrocklin at the Baptist Hospital. "Red" was an all-American basketball player at Western State Teachers College and pastimed in Louisville ranks with Edentide Club.

McCrocklin
William

William McCrocklin dies; was star athlete at Western

From Staff and Special Dispatches

William M. "Red" McCrocklin, the first All-America basketball player at Western Kentucky University, died Sunday in Stuart, Fla. He was 65.

McCrocklin was a graduate of Louisville Male High School and a former basketball coach at Manual High School.

Although he earned All-America honors and was captain of the 1938 team at Western, then known as Western State Teachers College, McCrocklin didn't participate in basketball until after his graduation from Male.

The late Ed Diddle, a longtime basketball coach at Western, said in 1966, when he nominated McCrocklin for the Kentucky Basketball Hall of Fame:

"Red was one of the finest defensive centers I ever coached, as well as a terrific scorer and team player.

"Red is a credit to himself, his school and the entire state of Kentucky. You could find no better candidate for the Kentucky Hall of Fame."

McCrocklin was a native of Ohio County, a retired sales executive for the Buick Division of General Motors Inc., an Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, and a member of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Mayflower Society.

Survivors include his wife, the former Kathryn "Kitty" Swearingen; two sons, William M. McCrocklin Jr. of Forrestville, Calif., and Thomas McCrocklin of Boca Raton, Fla.; his mother, Mae McCrocklin of Louisville; and two grandchildren.

The funeral will be at 2 p.m. tomorrow at McAfee Funeral Home, 3928 Bardstown Road, with burial in Resthaven Memorial Park.

Visitation at the funeral home will be today from 3 to 5 and 7 to 9 p.m.

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McCROCKLIN, WILLIAM

75th ANNIVERSARY (Add One)

A native of Pittsburgh, Pa., Ploumis was a standout in both football and track at Western from 1950-54. One of the club's top offensive ends as a gridder, Ploumis jokingly refers to himself as "the guy that helped make Jimmy Feix famous."

Upon his graduation from Western in 1954, Ploumis was drafted by the Los Angeles Rams as the man who might replace legendary Hall-of-Famer Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch at split end. Ploumis, in fact, made the Rams' final cut but, in a last-minute decision, gave up a profootball career and instead went to medical school at the suggestion of Western mathematics professor Dr. Hugh Johnson.

Ploumis credits Dr. Johnson along with Dr. H.L. Stephens, Dr. L.Y. Lancaster and Dr. Ward Sumpter of the Western biology department as persevering influences during his stay on the Hill.

"Those men roasted me over a fire. I was somewhat complacent as a student in the beginning but after hearing them tell me how important school was, I finally got things in gear," said Ploumis. "My instructors, along with Coach (Fred) Clayton, gave me a great deal of motivation. It was that combination of athletics and academics that made Western one of the memorable parts of my life."

Western was also memorable for William "Red" McCrocklin, Western's first basketball All-American and one of the finest players in the school's history.

McCrocklin was a standout on some of Coach E.A. Diddle's finest teams that had a phenomenal combined record of 77-9 from 1935-36 to 1937-38.

Following graduation from Western, McCrocklin taught and coached at Louisville's Manual High School; but soon got a job in sales with the Buick Motor Division, which was to remain his employer for the next 34 years.

After 20 years as a salesman, McCrocklin was promoted to General Service Manager of the Buick company. He remained in that position for 14 years until his retirement in 1976. Today, McCrocklin is enjoying his retirement in Stuart, Florida.

"We had some good times at Western and we had some awfully good ballclubs," said McCrocklin. "Of course, Western was a small school back in those days and everybody seemed to know everybody else. We all got along well."

"Mr. Diddle was a one-of-a-kind person and helped me in many, many ways. You're never able to forget a man like him," he continued. "One of the things I remember most is that we were dying to play Kentucky and they never would play us. I guess some things don't change."

Another former Hilltopper standout who has enjoyed great success since his playing days at Western is Dr. Jack Glasser, a bright young general practitioner in Bowling Green.

Glasser was a standout in the classroom and on the baseball diamond in each of his four years at Western (1970-73). A two-time All-Ohio Valley Conference catcher (1971, '73), Glasse

75th ANNIVERSARY (Add Two)

was named to the NCAA Academic All-America first-team and was selected as the University's Athlete-of-the-Year as a senior.

He too feels that "the books" and "sports" parallel in a number of meaningful ways.

"Sports and schoolwork make you discipline yourself, both physically and mentally. Athletics taught me how to deal effectively with people and that has helped me tremendously as a doctor," said Glasser. "I loved my four years at Western and wouldn't trade them for anything. There are some experiences in life that you just can't buy."

These are just four of hundreds who achieved academic and athletic successes at Western Kentucky University before going on to successful careers on local, regional and national levels.

And as much as they revere and acknowledge Western as an integral part of their rise to successful careers, Western acknowledges them to an even greater degree as products of academic and athletic programs that continue to flourish for the benefit of students, faculty, friends and associates for years to come.

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This Month in WKU's history:

Aug. 1, 1979, Dr. Donald W. Zacharias became the University's sixth president.

Aug. 4, 1966, the University Academic Council was formed.

JP/jd

75th Anniversary