



Coach Charles Adams McCullough Sr.

April 16, 1933 - August 4, 2017

Charles Adams McCullough Sr., who shaped the lives of countless young men as a coach and mentor, passed away August 4, 2017, after a long struggle with pulmonary fibrosis. He was 84, and across Charlotte and beyond, literally hundreds who played basketball for him at West Charlotte High School and elsewhere are recalling their beloved coach with sadness and yet gratitude for having known him.

Coach McCullough was born and raised in Charlotte, son of John and Annie Mae McCullough. He graduated from West Charlotte High, where he lettered in four sports and set the Mecklenburg County high jump record that stood for many years. Shy by all accounts – and handsome as the girls would attest! – he'd get up at 3 a.m. to deliver milk, often using what he earned from odd jobs to buy toys for his younger siblings. After serving two years in the U.S. Army at Fort Benning, Ga., he attended N.C. Central University, where he played baseball and basketball and ran track and field before graduating in 1956. He excelled in the high jump, competing successfully on a national level. He and his first wife, Delauris were married in 1959 and raised three children. She survives.

In 1960, he returned to his alma mater, West Charlotte High, and made an indelible mark as one of North Carolina's most successful basketball coaches. Over 33 seasons, his Lions won some 600 games and five state championships. More than that, he helped mold his players into standup young men, and helped instill pride in the community that lived and died with West Charlotte High sports. After retiring from West Charlotte High, he coached for five seasons at Livingstone College in Salisbury, NC.

After retiring from teaching and coaching, Coach McCullough and his second wife, Bertha, lived for 20 years in Bowie, Md. She passed in 2012. He came back home to Charlotte in late 2014. Soon after, he was diagnosed with the respiratory disease that took his life.

Coach McCullough is survived by two children – Cynthia Delauris McCullough of Charlotte and Charles Adams McCullough Jr. of Winston-Salem; three siblings – Catherine M. Chapman of Charlotte, Robert L. McCullough and his wife, Betty Jo, of Charlotte, and Richard McCullough and his wife, Alice, of Nashville, Tenn.; and two grandchildren – Nicole H. McNabb and her husband, Gregory, of Upper Marlboro, Md., and Symone A. Herring of Charlotte.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Bertha; son Derrick Von McCullough, who lost his life in a car accident; and brother Johnny L. McCullough.

The family is deeply grateful for family members and friends who offered so much love during Coach McCullough's illness, including caregivers Gladys Bland and Saria Little. His beloved nephew, Ivan Chapman, served as his driver when he first fell ill.

Coach McCullough lived a life to remember, and emulate. He doted on his family, rarely missing a child's game or recital. He taught his kids how to play and enjoy sports of all kinds. He loved jazz, poetry, the classics and westerns. When he could no longer play golf, he loved watching it on TV. The day he died, The Observer asked several former West Charlotte High players to measure his impact in their lives. Jeff McInnis, who played for the West Charlotte Lions and UNC-Chapel Hill Tar Heels before a successful career in the NBA, put it best.

"Feels like losin' my own dad...He really taught me to be accountable on and off the court! He was a legend coach but a better man.

Cemetery

Events

Oaklawn Cemetery

AUG
10

Memorial Service

11:00AM

Charlotte, NC,

Ebenezer Baptist Church

2020 W. Sugar Creek Road, Charlotte, NC, US, 28262

Comments



“ McCullough family- So sorry for your loss. Being part of the family I am sure Charles was a fine person. Sympathy and prayers for you.

Tim Renckens - August 11, 2017 at 09:13 AM



“ What a privilege it was to know and be coached by McCullough. He was always trying to get us to see our potential, and to work hard to be the best. We would get on his "last nerve" at times but he loved us none the less. I have many fond memories of how he would make us laugh while not even trying, and make us run those suicide drills. We are better from having known him, and I'm eternally grateful for his impact on my life. I'm praying for and with you Cynthia and Jr.

Rev Alexis Wendell Anthony



Alexis - August 09, 2017 at 02:26 PM



“ Mr. McCullough was a fine person and a great teacher,he set a fine example for everyone Rest In Peace.

Janie Trull Spencer - August 09, 2017 at 08:01 AM



“ Praying for the Family due to there Loss!!!!



Juanita Feely - August 09, 2017 at 06:57 AM



“ 13 files added to the album Memories Album



A.E. Grier & Sons Funeral and Cremation, LLC. - August 08, 2017 at 05:35 PM



“ I wish to extend my sincere condolences to the McCullough family. As Coach now restfully sleeps in peace, may your precious memories of him help ease your pain. As we mourn, please know that the God of all comfort feels your pain and sorrow. Isaiah 61:1,2 reads: "He sent me (Jesus Christ) to bind up the brokenhearted, ... and To comfort all who mourn, ...". Lean on him for support. He will help you through this grievous time. Loving thoughts and prayers are with you. John 6:40.



Sharon Elaine - August 08, 2017 at 01:46 PM



“ To the Family of Coach Charles McCullough: The 1967 Class of West Charlotte Senior High School would like to express of sincere condolences to you on the loss of father. We share your n your loss because he was very, very special to us as a teacher, friend, coach and mentor. Over the years we have been able to apply many of the lessons he taught beyond the field of athletic competition into our lives as adults. For those reasons as more he will always be in our memories. May God's Grace give your peace and comfort during this time and in the days ahead.

Butch - August 08, 2017 at 12:05 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album





“ To Charles McCullough Family: The Love family is very sorry for the passing of Charles. Our prayers are with you. John, Harriet, Buddy and Jewel.

John Love - August 07, 2017 at 06:07 AM