



# **Playing for a Winner**

## *Remembering* **Coach Milton Jowers**



Vernon McDonald



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I would also like to thank 1960 Southwest Texas basketball team for helping to fund the printing of this book and also for getting my Basketball Endowment off the ground. I cannot say enough about how much I truly love this bunch of Bobcats.

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All of this material that I have put into this book is true as far as I know. This is the way that I, and others who knew Coach Jowers, remember it. This has really been a labor of love. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed compiling it.



*Milton Jowers relaxing at a luncheon.*

## INTRODUCTION



I first met Coach Jowers in the spring of 1948. I had been attending junior college and he asked me to come to San Marcos during the spring training period and work out with the Bobcats. He offered me a scholarship after that and I played for him at Southwest Texas. In 1953 Coach hired me as his assistant. Then in 1961 he hired me as the head basketball coach and he was the athletic director until his death in 1972. I felt like I knew Coach Jowers as well as anyone because of this long, close association.

For the past several years, Bobby Roberts, Lewis Gilcrease, and Joe (Lefty) Peery have constantly pestered me to write something about Coach Jowers, his boys and Southwest Texas. I am the last connection between Coach Strahan and Coach Jowers, and they thought I should do something with all the stories floating around about him.

Several years ago after one of the Bobcat basketball games, three ex-players asked me to go to Lewis Gilcrease's home. Lewis had his VCR prepared and we spent some time telling stories and getting them all on tape. There are stories in this book from that tape. These stories are marked "As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house." That was the beginning of this book. It wasn't long afterwards that I asked former players to send me stories they knew of or had heard about Coach Jowers. I wanted stories that maybe only they knew. I received these stories and started trying to compile them into something.

### **Milton Warren Jowers**

Milton Jowers was from McMahan, Texas. His parents were G.C. and Ethel Jowers. He was born on July 12, 1914. He was born and raised on the farm the family still owns. When Milton and his brother were very young, their parents worked as sharecroppers.

They saved and were later able to buy property of their own where they lived and farmed for the rest of their lives.

He went to McMahan Grammar School from 1921–1927 and McMahan High School from 1927–1931. He never talked much about his family. My mother told me the following story about his dad. She said that he was a short man and was a farmer. He loved to hunt quail and so while he was plowing and planting grass and different things, his tractor would go by the quail so many times they wouldn't even fly out from under the bushes. They'd just sit still. He would plow by these birds over and over, when it got time to go quail hunting, he'd get on his tractor. He'd drive up to the quail and they'd look at him, and he was able to shoot them right on the ground. He said that he wanted to kill quail but he didn't want to go hunting. I think Coach Jowers may have been kind of like his daddy. He was going to win.

He enrolled as a freshman in Southwest Texas State College in 1931. While in school at Southwest Texas State Normal School, he was a member of the Fidelis Duces (spirit club), the Jeffersonian Literary Society, the Nolle Chapter of Alpha Chi, and the "T" Association. In 1935, Coach Shands was quoted "Early in the season (1935), Coach Jowers was shifted from guard to forward and frequently won high-scoring honors with an uncannily accurate one-hand push shot." (*Southwest Texas State Normal School Pedagog*, 1935–36).

In the 1935 *Pedagog*, Jowers said the following about himself:

*"TheysaidthatIwasconceited.TheysaidthatIwasproud of my prowess; they were right. I thought myself a very attractive male. Popeye confirmed my suspicions; she succumbed. I was captain of the Basketball Team. I was Nolle Scholarshippper. I professed not to study, but I lied. I ran for the Student Council. I carried a block of eleven votes solid. I ran fifth. There were six in the race. I became an ex-officio member of the Fidelis Duces. I was a better man than you were, Gunga Din."* (*Southwest Texas State, Pedagog*, 1935, p. 150)

Coach Jowers went to Southwest Texas at the same time that Lyndon Johnson was attending. These two did not get along very well. There were two service organizations on campus at that time. One was the White Stars and the other was the Black Stars. Coach also hated the fact that Lyndon would sneak into the gym and shower from time to time since his home did not have a shower or else it was too busy. He did like the fact that both were Democrats. When Lyndon Johnson first ran for the Presidency, Coach Jowers went to vote and when he returned I asked him how he voted, and he said that he never thought that he would vote for anything that had to do with Lyndon Johnson but that he had voted for him because he was a Democrat.

After graduating from Southwest Texas State Normal School, Jowers coached basketball and football at Teague, Shiner and San Marcos High Schools. Coach Jowers was the basketball coach at San Marcos High School where he won a state basketball championship in 1940. In those days there was only one classification of schools. San Marcos had to defeat schools like El Paso, Abilene, and Austin on their way to the state championship. He had every starter returning for the following year, 1941.

On December 7th, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and Coach Jowers enlisted in the Navy on December 8th. When WWII started, he immediately resigned his coaching job and joined the US Navy. What a patriot! Coach worked his way up in the Navy until he became a Gunnery Commander. His ship was in several battles during the war. Sometime, near the end of the war, the United States Military decided to have a "War College" at Notre Dame. The military picked 50 men out of all the personnel in the entire military services. Out of the hundreds of thousands of eligible men, Coach Jowers was selected as one of the 50. This is hard to believe. He was not just a coach; he was something very, very special.

I think Coach Jowers was the most brilliant person I ever met. He knew and understood so many things that were happening in the world. When he was alone he was constantly reading. Over the years Coach has told me so many things. I've forgotten many of them, but

want to share the ones I do remember. I spent many, many days, weeks, and even years with this man. Our offices were side by side. We traveled together to many places, many times, and to too many games. We shared hotel rooms and even sometimes shared the same bed because he was so cheap. You think that was uncomfortable? Coach would sleep on his half of the bed and I would sleep on my half with my arm hanging off the side so that we would not touch. Coach never talked much, but with all this time together, Coach told me a lot of his personal stories. He didn't talk much about World War II, the war that he was part of for over four years, but over the course of all our togetherness he would tell a little bit now and a little bit more later. I guess he eventually did tell a lot of his war stories.

## **War Stories**

One time the battleship that he was the gunnery officer on was attacked by a group of Japanese Kamakazi airplanes. Two of these planes finally hit his ship. It was hit so badly that it was slowly sinking. He said that two of their sister ships came and attached themselves to each end of the ship somehow and then towed the ship to a port where they could start work on it. These two Kamakazi planes that hit their ship killed many sailors and he said that he was very lucky not to have even been injured. During this battle, some of his guns were shooting so fast and so many bullets that the barrel of the guns turned red hot.

## **Battle of Leyte Gulf**

Toward the end of World War II, the U.S. Navy intercepted an order for a large part of the Japanese Navy to proceed to some point in the Pacific that had to go through the Leyte Gulf. Our Navy decided that the Leyte Gulf would be a perfect area for our ships to ambush this part of the Japanese Navy. Coach told me that the U.S. Navy got to the Gulf early and divided their fleet with one half on one side and the other half on the other side. Sure enough when the

time arrived, this large group of Japanese ships headed straight into the gulf and the U.S. trap. Our Navy waited until the first ship, the one that usually had the Admiral on it, to get almost through their trap and then all the American ships started a blistering attack. Coach thought that the Japanese Admiral then gave the wrong command. He could have told all the ships to turn around in their own water and head back out, but he gave the command for every ship to keep going straight ahead until they reached the same water that his ship was sitting. This meant that every Japanese ship had to keep going through the gulf until it reached where the Admiral was giving orders and then turn around and head back out. Coach said that all the ships on each side of the Japanese ships fired so many shells that all their guns were red hot. Coach thought that this awful defeat could have been one of the turning points of the war. This battle is now known as the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

Another time, he had two new recruits handling a set of guns and during a battle with the Japanese airplanes the guns were not working. Coach looked over the gun replacement and the two guys who were responsible for these guns were not even there. Coach started looking for them and finally found them in the very bottom of the ship hiding in a lot of coiled up ropes. Coach pulled out his gun and ordered these two men to go back up on the deck and on their way to pick up their two beds and bring them with them. When they got to their guns, Coach told each one to put his bed on each side of their guns and to stay there 24 hours a day except to freshen up and to get their meals. Coach said that they eventually made real good gunners.

Discharged as a Commander, Coach Jowers served in the United States Navy from January 1942 until April 1946. Forty months of this service was spent overseas.

## **Life After the War**

Upon Coach Jowers' discharge, he returned to coach at his alma mater in 1946. Coach Strahan, who was the athletic director at



*Milton Jowers and Erma Foster  
(Courtesy of Jimmy Jowers)*

Southwest Texas, hired Jowers as the new head basketball coach and line coach in football.

It was here in San Marcos that Coach met his perfect match in Erma Foster who was teaching in the Physical Education Department at the college. They married in 1950 but because of the nepotism rule, Erma had to quit her job at Southwest Texas. When their children were older she returned to teaching in the local public schools.

A year or so later, they had their first child, a girl named Merrie Ellen. Jowers was one happy guy! Up on the chalkboard in the Quad, an announcement read, "Coach and Mrs. Jowers are the proud parents of a baby girl cheerleader." As Merrie Ellen got older, Coach invited me and my wife, Dolores, to come to their apartment in Bobcat #2 for dinner. After our meal, we sat in the living room and watched TV for a while. Very few people had televisions in those days and this was a



treat for us. Coach Jowers got up and went into the bedroom and got out a multi-colored blanket. He brought Merrie Ellen into the room and proceeded to point to the different colors and let her name them. He was so proud of his daughter.

## **Ellen's Memories**

As a youngster growing up in San Marcos in the 1950s and early 1960s, I loved summertime. My family's home was outside of town on the banks of the Blanco River. Our house was not air-conditioned, so keeping cool was always a challenge. My brother, Jimmy, and I would spend mornings in the sandbox my dad built for us under the big anaqua tree in the backyard or playing on our swing set under the pecan trees on the bluff above the river. As the day heated up, we headed inside. I remember sitting on the cool tile floor in our living room, where I read or played jacks with the handball my dad brought to me from the gym. On several afternoons during the week, my mom took Jimmy and me to Sewell Park to swim. But my favorite time of the day was the evening, when my dad came home. Jimmy and I waited for him; when we heard his truck coming across the bridge near our house, we ran down the driveway to meet him and to hitch a ride back to the house. After supper, when the temperature had cooled a bit, we all played softball in the front yard. My dad pitched, Jimmy and I took turns batting, and my mom guarded the picture windows on the front of our house just in case one of us hit a line drive in that direction.

My dad was a New York Yankees fan, so naturally Jimmy and I were fans as well. Every Saturday and Sunday afternoon we gathered around the television to watch the Yankees play. I knew all the players' names and their stats and loved to talk baseball with my dad. During June or July, our annual trip to visit my mom's family in Kansas was an opportunity to see the Yankees play in Kansas City. In 1961, when I was nine years old and Roger Maris and Mickey Mantle were challenging Babe Ruth's homerun record, my dad got tickets for a three-game series between the Yankees and the Kansas Athletics.

On the afternoon we arrived in Kansas City, Jimmy was not feeling well, so my mom stayed with him at the motel while Daddy and I went to the game. I was so excited as we drove to the stadium. Who would pitch? Would Roger or Mickey hit a homerun? I remember sitting along the third base line, waving my Yankee pennant, cheering for our team. To my delight, late in the game, Roger hit one into the lights over the right field fence.

*Submitted by Ellen Jowers Lund*

In April of 1963, Coach and Erma Jowers' son Jimmy was born, and now their family was complete. Coach Al Reeh used to live next door to Coach Jowers when Coach's two children were still in middle school. One day Al said that he heard something like "Hut... Hut... Hut..." He looked out of the window toward Coach Jowers house and there was his son Jimmy, who was probably in the 7th grade, and he was attacking a large tree with a small mattress wrapped around it. Jimmy would get down in a football stance and Coach Jowers would say "Hut" and Jimmy would charge the tree and either block it or tackle it. Al said he went over to Coach Jowers home and asked him what he was doing and Coach Jowers said, "Jimmy would not really hit in football, so he was practicing him hitting something." That was Coach Jowers.

One time Dolores and I went out to Coach's home, located on the Blanco River, to eat dinner with them. It was during winter and pretty cold. Coach had a fireplace and it was getting low on wood. Mrs. Jowers said, "Milton, we need more wood for the fireplace." Coach was telling us some story and he just kept right on talking with us while Mrs. Jowers was busy in the other room. In a few minutes, Mrs. Jowers came back into the room where we were sitting and saw that Coach had not brought in wood yet and said, "MILTON, I told you to go get some wood, and I mean NOW!" Coach quickly got up, went outside and got an armload of wood. When he came back in, I asked him where he had been and he said, "Shut Up!" I did.

## **The Preacher and the Coach**

Sometime in the 1960s a Baptist minister by the name of Paul Powell moved into San Marcos and became the pastor of the First Baptist Church. Since my entire family was Baptist, we got to know and really like this preacher. After some time, Reverend Powell asked me if Coach Jowers was a Christian. I told him that I could not judge but as far as I knew he did not ever say anything about his religion. He then asked me if Coach ever went to church. Again, I told him that I did not know but that I had never seen him in a church. He told me that he needed to visit with Coach Jowers. I jokingly said that if he had guts enough to try, and if Coach did not bite his head off, that it was probably a good idea.

My statement to Paul was like saying sic em' to a dog. He called Coach the very next day and told him who he was and asked him if it would be all right for him to come visit. Coach told him to come on. Sure enough the very next morning in came the preacher. Since my office was next to Coach Jowers' office and with my door open, I could see anyone that came in the front door. Paul knocked on Coach's door and Coach asked him to come in and before the door to Coach's office closed, I heard Paul say to Coach Jowers that he was coming to talk to him about his soul and the door closed and that was all I heard. Paul stayed about a half hour or more and as he walked out he turned toward Coach's office and said that he would see him the next Sunday. Coach was in church the next Sunday and almost every Sunday thereafter. It wasn't long until Coach became a Christian and Paul baptized him right here in the First Baptist Church. When Coach passed away, Paul Powell was the preacher. I will forever be grateful and thankful for Paul Powell.

## **If There is a Need for Change... Change It**

Coach Jowers started coaching at SWT in 1946. His teams were not very successful during the first two years of his tenure, but during the Christmas break in 1949-50, Coach Jowers decided that he had to make a change if his team was going to improve from the

four wins and four losses. He started deciding what each one of his players was best at and then how to incorporate their abilities in the best interests of his team. He decided that the one player, J.C. (Spider) Maze, must be his key player. Coach decided that the only thing that Spider could do was jump and rebound. He couldn't catch the ball very well, couldn't shoot, couldn't make free throws, but he could get all the rebounds. Coach knew that he had to leave him around the basket at all times on offense. He then put another big player, Hugh (Slim) Berry, on the free throw line and spread out the other three players. After his players came back from Christmas vacation, Coach put circles on the floor with masking tape and had his players running plays and individually running from circle to circle while learning what he wanted them to do. After many hours of practice, his players learned this new offense and as a result tied for the Lone Star Conference Championship. This was the beginning of the very successful Tandem Post Offense that Coach ran until he retired from basketball in 1961.

Coach Jowers' teams played a man-for-man defense during his entire basketball-coaching career until 1957. He had a basketball player, Charles Sharp, who eventually became one of, if not the very best offensive player in the history of Southwest Texas State basketball. He could not play man-for-man defense without fouling. It did not take very long in a game until Charles was in foul trouble and Coach would have to take him out. Coach made the decision, a long and hard decision, to change his defense to a 1-3-1 zone that many teams were using. Coach did not want to just play a normal 1-3-1 zone. He wanted it to be fitted to his personnel. He then started with the normal 1-3-1 zone and started changing it more and more as he saw fit. Eventually this defense evolved into a very unique zone which, in my opinion, was the key to winning the national championship.

Between the tandem post and the match-up 1-3-1 zone and great recruiting, Southwest Texas State won the National Championship in 1960. Just remember... if it needs changing, change it.

## Putting the Pieces Together— The 1959–60 Basketball Team

Coach Jowers really believed that for any of his basketball teams to be successful, they had to have several special parts. First, he believed that his team must have at least one really good player and hopefully two. Along with these two special players, he needed about four or five good players. He always thought that seven or eight players on his first group were all the players that he needed to have a very good team and season.

He also tried to have his second group of players be good and usually younger than his first group. They had to realize their playing time was coming in the future, but for now they were to provide the competition for the first team. He believed that this second group must know that he, Coach Jowers, saw strong potential in them. They needed to work extremely hard in order to enhance their playing time in years to come. With this understanding, he thought they would play hard every day in practice and that in turn would make the first group work harder.



*1959–1960 Southwest Texas Basketball Team at the beginning of the season.*

This following story about the 1960 National Championship Team is truly a story in itself. Coach Jowers outdid himself in realizing his goal of putting this type of championship material together. It was great recruiting, good luck, and fate that put this whole team together. And it reached its potential at exactly the right time.

## 1960 National Championship Team with Banner

March 12—Bobcats awarded NAIA championship trophy.



*Left to right: Vernon McDonald, Harper Augsburger, Charles Sharp, Boonie Wilkening, Bruce Gregg, Jack Worthington, Bobby Henson, Coach Milton Jowers, Earl Lankford, Rudy Davalos, Chuck Trcka and Howard Lockart.*

*(Courtesy of SWT Pedagogy)*

## Players

Charles Sharp graduated from Carrizzo Springs High School in May of 1955. His eligibility was to be completed in the spring of 1959. His freshman year, Charles was walking across a busy street in Austin and was hit by an automobile. He had a concussion and had to drop out of school after spending weeks in the hospital and rehab. He re-enrolled at SWT in the fall of 1956, which made his eligibility expire in the 1959–60 season.

Boonie Wilkening was a much sought after high school player because he was such a great shooter. He graduated from Clear Creek

High School in the spring of 1959 and enrolled at the University of Houston. After one semester he decided that his future was at Southwest Texas and he called Coach Jowers and asked him if he could transfer at mid-semester of that year. Coach told him that he could, so Boonie transferred at mid-semester. This made Boonie become a senior in 1959–1960.

Rudy Davalos graduated from Edison High School in San Antonio in the spring of 1956. Coach Jowers decided that he wasn't tall enough to play for Southwest Texas so Rudy took a basketball scholarship at Wharton Junior College. Our freshman team played Wharton two times that year and Rudy proved to Coach Jowers that he could play for Southwest Texas. So, with a full scholarship he transferred to SWT after his freshman year and graduated in 1960.

Howard Lockhart had only played center at Brackenridge High School in San Antonio. He wanted to play football and basketball in college and the only place that would let him do that was Del Mar College in Corpus Christi. After his freshman year Coach Jowers decided to persuade Howard to transfer to SWT and play only basketball on the condition that he learned to play a guard or forward position. Howard did transfer and started learning to play his new position and learn a new shot. Since Howard had only played the post position, he had to learn to shoot the ball from the outside position. Howard developed a tumor in his jaw and could not play for a while. He was a senior in 1960.

Bruce Gregg graduated from Seguin High School in 1957. He had a scholarship to Texas A&M and North Texas but after visiting one time with Coach Jowers and finding out that his girlfriend was going to attend SWT, he decided to come to SWT also. Bruce confided in me that Coach Jowers told him that if he would come to SWT he could expect these four things during his four years here. He said that they would be pretty good his first year, the next year would be a downer, the third year would be a good year, and if things worked out, chances were good that they could be national champions his junior year which was 1959–60.

Earl Lankford, the last big piece of the 1960 National Championship puzzle, came to SWT in 1955. Earl was to be a team captain in 1957. He, as a freshman, had won the starting high post position from a player who was "All Conference" as a junior. However, in the fall of 1957, an epidemic of Asian Flu swept the nation and Earl came down with the flu and was in the infirmary for several days. When released, he was told to return to practice. During practice, everyone was running laps and Earl began to shiver and experiencing a chill. He told Coach Jowers that he was getting sick again and Jowers said, "Just run faster." As a team captain, Coach demanded that Earl be on the floor for the first day of practice.

That night Earl and his wife Lynne decided he would drop out of SWT as he was too ill to go to classes or practice with the basketball team. They moved to Houston, but he neglected to drop his classes. Shortly before the fall semester of 1958, Earl received a call from a close friend of Coach Jowers, Buck Payne, saying that Coach wanted him to return to SWT in order to become eligible to play basketball again in 1959-60. So, Earl went to school during the fall of 1958, worked for Stokes Construction Company during the spring and summer of 1959. He returned as a student and a member of the SWT Basketball Team of 1959-60 that won the NAIA National Championship.

Jack Worthington was very much a part of this bunch of guys. He started very few games but was always ready and always gave his all. He came to this school without a lot of fanfare and Coach Jowers redshirted him. He worked out every day with the team but never played a game in his first year at SWT. Jack needed this extra time to work on his overall basketball game. When he was younger, he broke his right arm and could never straighten it out, this kept Jack from becoming a great shooter. He mastered other phases of the game; like running the floor, playing defense, handling the ball, and making good sharp and correct passes. With the additional year because of redshirting, Jack really blossomed on the basketball court.

Coach had the right personnel. The next step was to make sure that he had the offense and the defense to utilize the strengths and abilities of each player.



Any team can play the tandem post and 1-3-1 zone however, either one of these team concepts is better if you have particular type players to play each position. I think that there must be two key parts of this offense and defense. First, on offense you must have a true post man. One who can score, catch the ball, pass sometimes, and can rebound. Secondly, you must have a true point man to run this offense. This player must be quick, have good basketball sense, be a respectable shooter, and have complete knowledge and control of the offense.

SWT had these two players in Charles Sharp and Rudy Davalos. It is best if you have a left-handed guard to play on the right side of the offense since he will be dribbling to the center of the court a lot, and will probably be more proficient when dribbling with his left hand. This player should be a good shooter too. Boonie Wilkening was the perfect fit for this position. The next position, the third outside position, should be played by a taller player, and if possible, one who can run and jump. If he has an outside shot, this is a big plus. Howard Lockhart was a perfect fit for this position. Now you need to have a tall, strong, and tough player to play the baseline position. He should be your best rebounder, defend the offensive post position, and if he can score, that would be great. Bruce Gregg and Earl Lankford were perfect for these positions.

On playing the 1-3-1 defense, the key player is the point guard. This player must harass the ball handlers, play tough against the cross court guard-to-guard pass, and help on the long rebound when the ball is shot. Rudy Davalos was just the person for this job. The baseline man must be quick and be able to guard both corners whenever the ball is there. Boonie Wilkening was right for this job.

The two wing men could be average defensive men since their main job was to force the man they were guarding to either pass or dribble down the sideline only. The next important job for them was to get the rebound, especially when it was shot from the opposite side from which they were playing.

The defensive post man should be that big, old, tough man. His job is to always guard the offensive post man and then get the rebounds,

and we had two good ones in Bruce Gregg and Earl Lankford. Each one was a positive for us since Earl was a better scorer than Bruce.

The good part about this team was the second team. Either Chuck Trcka or Donny Schmeltekopf handled the point guard very adequately. Chuck was the better scorer and Donny was the better defensive man. The place for the left-handed position was Bob Henson. He was left-handed and a much better ball handler than Boonie and much larger and a better rebounder. He was not the shooter that Boonie was and no one else was either. The third outside position was handled by Frank Miller and sometimes by Jack Worthington. He could not shoot too well since he had a crooked right arm that was broken in his younger years, but he could run, rebound and handle the ball well enough. We had one other player who played either wing position and played it well. This player was Lloyd Little. Lloyd was a great high jumper and was on a track scholarship but he also played basketball. He would have been a much better basketball player had he not high jumped, but how could anyone argue with him since he won the conference high jump all four years that he was here? The offensive post position was handled by Harper Augsburg and again sometimes by Earl Lankford. Harper was a good post man. He was not the big one that you would like to have, but he was strong, could jump and had a good jump shot. Best I can remember about Frank was that we could not figure out where to play him. He was tall, about 6 feet 7 inches, but he could play guard as well as post. We also had that big, old strong, tough baseline player in Dale Ethridge. This player is one big reason that Charles Sharp was as great as he was, since Dale worked Charles over every day in practice. It was always a battle royal.

During the 1960-61 basketball season, the second unit of this the previous season with the addition of Bruce Gregg and Earl Lankford won the Regional NAIA playoffs and returned to Kansas City to participate in the National Tournament once again. We won our first two games but Frank Miller was elbowed in the eye, which shattered his eye socket, and he was unable to play anymore in the tournament. We lost in the next round to a team from Michigan.

The reason that I have written this story is to show another reason why this group of players was so good and why they were the National Champions. The second team was really good. They gave the starters a fit every day in practice. I mean it was almost a war when we scrimmaged. One time Coach Jowers told the team that we were going to scrimmage and keep score. The team that won would start the next game. Remember this is 1960. We scrimmaged and the second team won and sure enough, Coach started them in the next game. I cannot say enough about our second team. In the 1961 season, with all the previous seniors gone, this team went back to Kansas City and won their first two games before losing to a team out of Michigan in the third round. Frank Miller's injury kept him from playing and I think had this not happened, we had a great chance of winning more games in the National Tournament.

### **Going to Kansas City – Here We Come!**



*1960 SWT Basketball Team in Winfield, Kansas – Front row: Earl Lankford, Bruce Gregg, Jimmy Jowers, Howard Lockhart, Bobby Henson, Chuck Trcka, and Ellen Jowers. Back row: Charles Sharp, Rudy Davalos, Harber Augsburger, Boonie Wilkening, Frank Miller, Vernon McDonald, Mrs. Erma Jowers, and Coach Milton Jowers.  
(Courtesy of Jimmy Jowers)*

## Basketball Coaches at Southwest Texas State



*Oscar Strahan, Pete Shands, Milton Jowers, and Vernon McDonald  
Basketball Coaches at Southwest Texas State.*

### Oscar Strahan

Coach Oscar W. Strahan graduated from Drake University in Iowa. He started his college work in Education with his main interest in Physical Education and Athletics, especially Track. When World War I started, Coach Strahan joined the service. After his discharge as a first lieutenant, Coach Strahan was hired in 1919 at Southwest Texas Normal to start the Physical Education Department and Athletics.

### Pete Shands

Coach Strahan was the basketball coach (1919–1924) and athletic director (1919–1961). One of his basketball players graduated and also went into the education and coaching fields. When Coach Strahan

decided to give up coaching basketball at Southwest State Teachers Normal, he hired one of his former players, Pete Shands, to take his place as basketball coach. Coach Shands was responsible for bringing Milton Jowers to Southwest Texas State College after a very successful tenure as a high school coach.

## **Milton Jowers**

Coach Strahan had to find a third coach for the Bobcat basketball team upon learning that Coach Shands was leaving SWT. He did not have to search very far because one of our most successful high school coaches was Milton Jowers. He was hired as the third SWT basketball coach in 1946. He remained the Bobcat basketball coach until 1961.

## **Vernon McDonald**

Coach Strahan had to find someone to coach a very lackluster football team and he immediately turned to his own basketball coach, Milton Jowers. Coach Jowers had coached the Bobcat football team previously and when asked to change jobs, he accepted and I became the next Bobcat basketball coach.

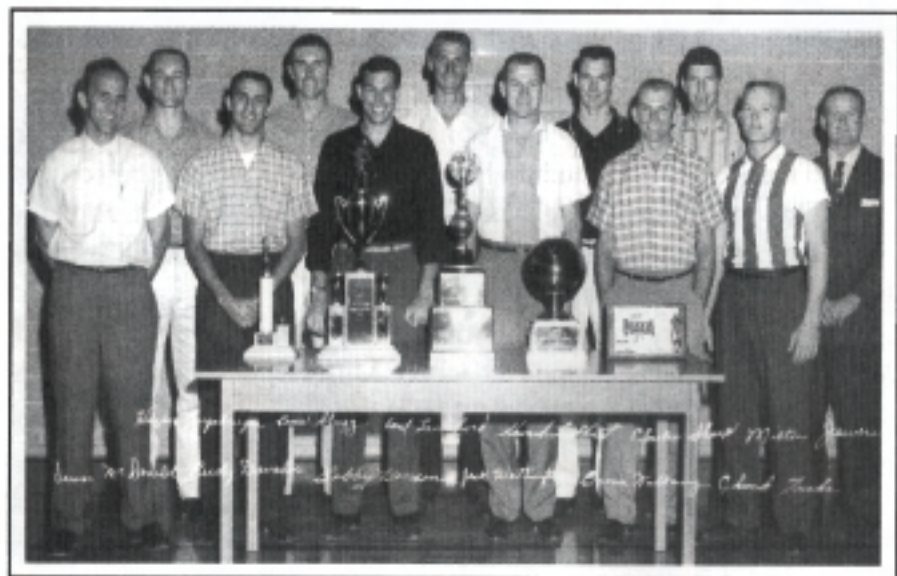
This was a very unique situation in that Coach Strahan coached Pete Shands, Coach Shands coached Milton Jowers, and Milton Jowers coached Vernon McDonald (me).



## Tournaments

Coach Jowers took our basketball teams to the National Tournament in Kansas City six times. The first time was in 1950-51 and SWT won one game and lost one. In 1952, he took a team to the National Tournament. That year the team won four games and lost one. He took a team to Kansas City in 1957, where we won one and lost one. Again in 1959, he took a team to the National Tournament and went four and one. In 1960, he took his fifth team to the National Tournament, where they won five games on their way to the National Championship. He took one more team to the National Tournament in 1961 where his team won two and lost one. That was his last year to be the basketball coach.

### 1960 National Championship Team and Their Trophies



*Back row: Harper Augsbarger, Bruce Gregg, Earl Lankford, Howard Lockhart, and Charles Sharp. Front row: Vernon McDonald, Rudy Davalos, Bob Henson, Jack Worthington, Chuck Trcka, and Coach Jowers.*

## NAIA All Stars

After winning the National Championship in 1960, Coach Jowers was named NAIA Coach of the Year. He was chosen to coach the NAIA All-Star team. This All-Star team was composed of nine players from other teams and three Bobcat players, Charles Sharp, Rudy Davalos, and Howard Lockhart. These 12 players worked out for about a week and then played in the Olympic Trial Tournament that was held in Colorado Springs, Colorado. One of the very first things Coach Jowers taught the Olympic team was the 1-3-1 zone that his Bobcats had used exclusively when playing defense in winning the NAIA Championship. In the first round of the tournament, the NAIA All-Stars had to play the NCAA National Champions from Ohio State. John Havlicek (Boston Celtics), Jerry Lucas (Warriors and Knicks) and Bobby Knight (Indiana and Texas Tech) were members of this team they were playing. The NAIA All-Stars led by the Bobcat players, and more importantly by Coach Jowers, upset the NCAA Ohio State team in the very first round of the tournament. Unfortunately, the NAIA All-Stars were beaten in the second round. The following letter to Dr. Flowers, then President of SWT, shows how much respect Coach Jowers received as the coach of this all-star team.

*Dear Dr. Flowers:*

*Not long ago I returned from Denver, Colo., where I saw all eight of the Olympic finals basketball teams.*

*The greatest thrill I got out of the whole tournament was seeing this small college "All Stars" coached by your Milton Jowers, win over the Ohio State club. They literally ran this big, powerful well-coached club off the floor with a display of drive and heart seldom seen in a lifetime of athletics.*

*Of all the fine coaches there, Milton Jowers did by far, the outstanding job in the whole tournament in beating Ohio State in the first round. He really did a job with those boys in the short time he had them.*

*Sincerely yours,*

*C.E. Bolin*

*Doyleville, Colorado*

## **McDonald Comes to Southwest Texas Teachers College**

I, Vernon McDonald, went to high school at Taylor High School. I played basketball and was a drum major in the band. My senior year we won the district basketball championship for the first time in the history of Taylor High School. And we still weren't very good, but I wanted to play basketball some more but I didn't know where to go to school. I would like to play basketball but I wasn't that good so I didn't know what to do. About that time my brother got out of the military and with a GI bill he was going to go to Texas Lutheran College, which was a junior college in those days. My mother wanted me to go with my older brother so I went, no scholarship, no help, no anything. I went to Seguin and played basketball at Texas Lutheran College with my brother for two years and there I had a coach named Coach Lehnoff who was really a pretty good basketball coach. I learned later on that he played basketball with Coach Jowers at Southwest Texas prior to going over there.



I played there two years and at the end of my second year, Coach Jowers invited me over to San Marcos to kind of try out or play with his team during spring training. I came over here two or three different days and played with them and went back home.

That was the last I heard until one day my mother called and said, "I want you to go to Southwest Texas next year."

I said, "Well I'd like to but I don't know how I'd do it."

My mother replied, "Well Coach Jowers called me and he's going to give you a scholarship."

I was shocked. I said, "Yeah, good."

She said, "I want you to go over there."

Well of course I went there. First of all, I went to SWT because they had a pretty good basketball program, but most important because I had a scholarship. It dawned on me, 'Why would Coach Jowers call my mother about me coming to school, but not call me?'

And so I asked her. I said, "Mama, why did Coach Jowers call you?"

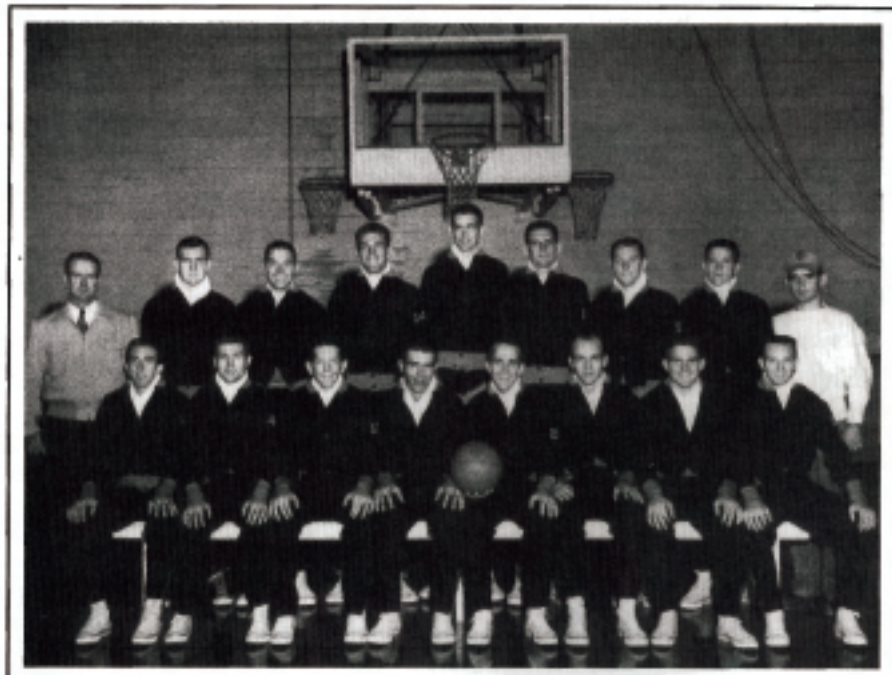
She said, "Oh I've known Milton since he was a little boy."

I questioned, "How's that?"

She said, "Well we were raised on adjacent farms over by McMahan, Texas."

So he knew my mother all these many years. When he decided he wanted me, he called Mom and she told me that I was going to Southwest Texas. So, thanks to my mother and Milton Jowers, I have been at Southwest Texas for all these many, many years.

## 1952 Southwest Texas Basketball Team



*Back row: Coach Milton Jowers, Les Talley, Hugh Berry, Herb Billings, J.C. Maze, James Prewitt, Joe Peery, and Joe Ammerman. Front row: Joe Sutton, Jimmy O'Banion, Pence Dacus, Johnny Weder, Vernon McDonald, Bob Beatty, Bookey Brymer, and Ed Whiteley.*

### Southwest Texas' Trip to National Tournament

Each year, the NAIA National Tournament is held in Kansas City. In 1952, after Southwest Texas won the play-off, we went to Kansas City. The teams could travel to Kansas City any way they wanted because the NAIA would pay transportation. Most of the teams that had any distance to travel would go by plane. We drove to Temple and got on a train and headed toward Kansas City, but our team stopped over in Winfield, Kansas and spent the night. We found out later that Coach wanted to spend the night where his in-laws lived. Our team was 26 and 0 and had to spend the night in some little Kansas town. Everybody flies in but here we were chuggin' in on a train. We stayed in the Phillips Hotel.

In 1952, in the first round, we played Arkansas Tech. They were undefeated with a record of 22 wins and 0 losses. We were also undefeated with 24 wins and 0 losses. We won the game by a score of 97-53.

Next round we played New Mexico A&M and won that game 69-52. In the third round, we played Detroit Tech, the best team that we had played that year. We beat them by the score of 65-57. In the fourth round we played Southwest Missouri. At the half we were leading 34-25 but the game ended in a tie and we eventually lost by two points in double overtime. Everything went wrong. I played the entire game making only five points. I must have shot the ball 100 times and could not make a goal with a pencil. Our other guard, Bookey Brimer, told Coach Jowers the day before the game, that he had joined the Navy and had to go back to Texas to take his physical. He didn't think he'd make the next game either – and he didn't. Even though our inside men played well, our guards didn't do their share.

We played Portland University out of Portland, Oregon in this next round for third place. We beat them pretty good too. We averaged beating teams by 34 points a game.

Our offense was 78 points per game and our defense was 44 points per game.

I graduated and went to Eagle Pass for one year and then came back in 1953. That was Lewis Gilcrease's senior year and we were really good then. We did not win the conference but we did have a good team. In 1954 and 1955, we again had more good teams. We had Herb Billings who was 7 feet tall and Bill Banks who was 6 feet 8 inches tall. We had a guy named Joe Peery who was left-handed. Players like Bobby Roberts, Bill Krueger, Duane Vincent, and others worked in the two guard positions. Coach Jowers said that Joe Peery was the best offensive guard in America during his senior year. Lefty was a really super basketball player.

We tied for the Lone Star Conference in 1955 and played East Texas for the third time that season to see who would go to Kansas City. East Texas beat us by two points in a double overtime game.

Shelby Metcalf was on that team and he went on to coach at A&M. East Texas went to Kansas City and won the final game by 18 points and the national championship fairly easily.

Coach could have won the National Championship in 1955 and should have won it in 1952 because we had won 29 straight games until we were beaten in double overtime by two points in the quarterfinals of the National Tournament. We ended up 30 and 1 that year.

We went back to Kansas City in 1959 and played Tennessee State in the quarterfinals and were tied with 15 seconds to go in the game. Tennessee State had the ball. Coach told Rudy Davalos, our best guard, to foul a freshman who was in the game. His name was Porter Merriweather. If he missed and we got the rebound, we had a great chance to win this game. Rudy fouled him and Porter missed the free throw, and after what seemed an eternity, Tennessee State got the rebound, took a long jump shot, and made it. The game ended and they won. Tennessee State went on to easily win the next game and the National Championship in 1959. With a little more luck, Coach Jowers could have won four national titles in a ten-year span.

Chapter 2

**BASKETBALL ANECDOTES**



*Milton Jowers explaining the tandem post offense to Vernon McDonald and Frank "Chico" Gensberg.*

## **Anecdotes about Coach Jowers from his “Boys”**

When I originally had the idea of putting together a book about Coach Jowers, I really didn't know how or where to start. After much urging from some of his former players and listening to their suggestions, I started contacting as many of his former players as possible. I asked them to send me their stories about Coach. I was absolutely overwhelmed with the response from his former basketball and football players. I guess if I had not been given a writing cutoff date, I'd still be receiving stories! I hope that you will enjoy reading these stories from Coach Jowers' “Boys.”

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### **A Player**

George Carlisle was a great athlete who played both football and basketball and was first team all-conference in each one. At the start of his senior year he came in to see Coach Jowers and told him that he had decided not to play football his last year of college. Coach didn't respond right away, so George asked him was that all right? Coach calmly told him that it would be just fine but there was one catch. If he did not play football and basketball both, he would just be on a half scholarship. George played both sports.

### **Lewis Gilcrease and Bill Banks**

Lewis was a great scorer on the 1953 basketball team. He averaged more points per game for one season than any other player in the history of Southwest Texas basketball. He was only 6 feet 1 and a half inches tall, and played the high post on the Bobcat tandem post offense. He could shoot a great hook shot. He could turn and face the basket from the free throw line and shoot a one-handed, one-foot shot. Most of all, he could shoot free throws. Lewis could maneuver around in the post position better than anyone that I have ever seen. He could usually get the position and the shot that he wanted.

Lewis also had the knack of getting fouled and fouled more often than anyone else in Bobcat history.

In 1955, Bill Banks was our post man. He was completely opposite of Lewis as to size. While Lewis was fairly short for a post man, Bill was just the opposite. He was about 6 feet 8 inches tall and weighed about 225 pounds. In size, Bill was the ideal post man. Later in his senior year, Bill asked me to see if he was getting as many free throws as Lewis. I checked both scorebooks and the result was that Lewis had actually made more free throws than Bill had even attempted! Bill did not ask me to check any further.

## **Don't Waste Tape!**

When we were playing basketball, Coach Jowers always had woolen socks for his team to wear. After you had them on for a good while and ran a lot, the sock always slipped down into your shoes and if you did not stop and pull them back up, they would quickly rub a blister on your foot. We found out that if you got a roll of tape and wrapped the tape around your leg and also over the tongue of your tennis shoe, this maneuver would hold your socks up all the time you were playing. We asked Assistant Coach Frank (Chico) Gensberg for some tape and he asked what it was for and we told him to hold our socks up. So he gave us about a foot or so of tape and told us to split it in two and use half on each leg. Well, the tape he gave us was that black friction tape and he said that was all the tape that we could just waste. We used the tape and it worked. The next day we went back for more tape and Chico asked, "Where's the tape I gave you the day before?" We told him that we threw it away. He told us in no uncertain terms that he would give us more but from then on when we got through with it the first time, we should stick it on the wall and use the same tape the next day. There was no use in wasting all that tape on holding up socks.

## Size 18

Herb Billings was 7 feet tall but had never played basketball in his life and Coach Jowers found out about him and asked him to come look around our campus. Herb did and you never saw such a tall, thin person in your life. Coach told him to put on some shoes and he would like to see him shoot the ball a little. Herb told him that he had never played before but Coach insisted on him putting on shoes and shoot some. Herb wore an 18-size shoe. We did not have any over a size 12. Coach told Herb to just put on socks and go out on the floor and shoot. Since we did not have any big shoes, we did not have any big socks. There was Herb with a size 12 pair of socks with the heel of the sock about midway under his foot and he was out on that slippery gym floor trying to shoot a ball that he had never shot before. Coach would not even come back to look and asked one of the players to go watch him. The player watched, came back, and reported to Coach that Herb had not made a goal yet but was still trying. Herb came to SWT and played for four years and played tremendous on defense because the other team never got a lay-up shot.

Herb graduated and became a foreign missionary in Guatemala. He passed away some time ago. We were so proud of what he had accomplished.

## Backwards

Back in 1951 or '52, we were practicing one day trying to run our offense against our second and third team players. We had run our offense over and over and some of us would take turns messing up. Coach Jowers got madder by the minute and finally he blew up and naturally he got mad at me this time. He screamed for me to put on another colored shirt so that I could play defense and told Roy Mitte, who had been playing defense all afternoon to take my place. He yelled at Roy and said, "Now, can you run this offense?"

Roy quickly said that he could but that he would have to play it backwards because that's all he had done all day. Coach almost



blew his stack and we almost choked to death trying not to laugh. We knew that this was no time to be humorous.

## **Friends Off the Court**

Coach Jowers always seemed to struggle and work so hard to defeat Howard Payne. He always thought they didn't recruit the same kind of players that other schools might recruit. He would rant and rave before the game, during the game, and after the game. He nearly always won the game but everyone thought that he hated the coach of Howard Payne whose name was Glen Whitis. What people did not know was that they really were pretty good friends. When time was available the day before, we played Howard Payne in basketball, these two, so-called bitter rivals, would usually play a few handball games. They really were pretty good friends even though most times they did not show it.

## **Axe Handle Practice**

In my first year (1949) at SWT we went to Nacogdoches to play Stephen F. Austin in basketball. After the game started they had a group of guys that had brought axe handles to the game and they started beating the wooden floor of the stands in unison and this loud noise really upset us. We lost by about 30 points and the next night too.

The next year, my second year, Coach Jowers asked Darrell Hortness to get a bunch of football players to go round up some trash can lids, go to the Music Department and get cymbals and almost anything to make noise. Darrell got this job done and then Coach asked them to come to practice every day before we went back to Nacogdoches that next year. The noise was terrible and we hated every day of practice. When we went to Nacogdoches to play at the end of this super noisy week, when the axe handles started beating on the floor, we started playing better and better. Darrell and the other

football players had truly helped us beat SFA in Nacogdoches for the first time in the history of our school.

*Submitted by Darrell Hortness and Vernon McDonald*

## **Singing and Dancing**

We had two athletes who were really good singers and they liked to sing as a duet. E.J. Swindler was a really good singer and performer, while Slim Berry was a good harmonizer to go with E.J. Anytime there was any kind of meeting where these two were present, Coach Jowers would insist they perform. They couldn't say no because he would keep on until they did. They knew several songs, but I always thought their best one was "Yo' Feet's Too Big."

Coach also thought that any good basketball player would always have good rhythm. This means that they could probably dance. Well, we had a basketball player, Charlie Sharp, who was an All-American and he could dance. If we were around a radio or some music, Coach would always try to get Charlie to dance. Usually Charlie would say "No", but every once in a while, he would get up and do a few dance steps and then shake his shoulders violently. Coach loved this.

## **"Turkey"**

Don "Turkey" Forester graduated from Alamo Heights High School in San Antonio. His senior year, his high school team won the state basketball championship. Coach Jowers attended the state tournament that year and saw that Don was a good athlete and decided to recruit him for SWT. After checking further on Don, he found out that he was also a good football player and an outstanding student. Coach convinced Don to come to SWT where he lettered in football as a tackle, lettered three times in basketball, and was the leading rebounder in the Lone Star Conference in his senior year of 1959. He was captain of the basketball team in 1959 that won the Lone Star Conference and the NAIA Playoffs. They went to Kansas City to participate in the National Basketball Tournament. The Bobcats won the

first three games and lost the fourth game by two points to Tennessee State, the team that won the tournament that year. Don was the leading rebounder in the entire tournament.

Don coached in high school until 1961. After I became the head basketball coach at SWT, I hired him to be my assistant. He remained as my assistant for eleven years and did a great job of coaching our post men both offensively and defensively.

One of Don's friends said, "Tremendous rebounder for a guy who could not jump high enough to slip a pencil under his feet, but kept us in the game with his rebounding against Tennessee A&I for third place."

## **Our First Game Against a Southwest Conference Team – Baylor**

During our junior year, two Southwest Conference teams were on our schedule. The first game, played at Baylor, pitted us against a team that we should have beaten by 10-15 points. With our "Southwest Conference jitters," we lost the game.

On the way back from the game, one of the players in Coach Jowers' car joked about how bad we had played. Coach Jowers commented, "I don't see a damn thing funny about it." When we got home around midnight, Jowers advised us that he would see us on court at one o'clock the next afternoon. One player remarked, "But Coach, I have..." That's as far as he got! Jowers flashed back, interrupting, "I didn't ask what you had! I told you to be there at 1 p.m.!"

## **Bobcats vs the Aggies**

This happened on a Tuesday night; our schedule was to leave on Thursday for Texas A&M, to play them on Thursday and Friday night. A&M happened to be the Southwest Conference champions with two All-Americans on the team—Jewell McDowell and Buddy Davis—Mr. Outside and Mr. Inside.

We were all on the court as scheduled. Jowers had the first and second teams on the court for four solid hours. We were told to run a

fast break offense and full-court press on defense. This we did during the whole workout. We thought he had gone crazy, particularly since we were to play the Southwest Conference Champions over the next two days!

We traveled to A&M on Thursday, played them that evening and won by five points! We were flabbergasted. Bookey guarded McDowell, and McDowell fouled out for the first time in his college career. Jowers later told Bookey that it was the best defensive game he had ever seen (a very rare compliment from this coach).

After the game, the A&M coach told Jowers, "Wait 'til tomorrow night." The next night the stadium was full of Aggies. They did everything they could do to get us off our game. We beat them by 12 points that night.

It took almost six months for someone to ask Jowers why he ran us so much between the games with Baylor and A&M. He merely shrugged his shoulders and commented, "Aw hell boys, I was just running a little nervous energy out of you."

*Submitted by Bookey Brymer*

## **Mac Gets Married**

Dolores and I decided to get married but knew that Coach Jowers didn't want anyone to be married on the team. I didn't know what to do. So we got married. Dolores went back to her dorm, I went back to my dorm and we weren't going to tell anybody. I wanted to tell everybody I saw.

So about two weeks later, we decided, well, I talked Dolores into it and said we'd better tell Coach Jowers. She reluctantly agreed. So I looked up Coach and I said, "Coach I need to talk to you."

He replied, "What do you want?"

"Dolores and I are thinking about getting married."

"Who is that? That little red-headed girl?"

And I said, "Yes sir. What do you think about us getting married?"

He asked, "Well, when's it going to happen?"

I replied, "Coach, about two weeks ago."

"Uh-oh are you in trouble?"

"No sir."

"Well then what are you asking me now for?"

"Well, Coach, I need to know if I've got a scholarship next year."

"Well, I'll think about it."

"No, no Coach, don't think about it, I need to know."

He relented, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, you can come back." He always had to make you sweat a little bit.

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## Spider Maze

When J.C. (Spider) was in high school, he graduated in mid-semester of his senior year. He was tall and very awkward at that age and even if he was going to graduate at mid-semester, his high school Coach let him still play on the "B" team. He was 6 feet 6 inches and in those days that was really tall. Upon graduating from Livingston Texas High School, he still had the desire to try to play basketball. He went to several junior colleges in East Texas and tried out with them. He went to Tyler Junior College, Kilgore Junior College and also he visited Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston College and all of them turned him down; he finally walked into the gymnasium at Southwest Texas and almost cried talking to Coach Jowers about giving him a chance to play college basketball. Since he was taller than anyone on our entire team Coach Jowers decided that he was worth a chance. Coach promised him a scholarship for one year and one year only with this stipulation. He must work out every day that school was in session for the entire year. Coach gave him a key to the gym and told him that if he ever came to the gym and he was not working out, he would run him off instantly. Naturally, Spider took the offer and came to Southwest Texas. His first year of playing for SWT was my second year playing at Texas Lutheran College. Spider was on the freshman team over here and our junior college team played them twice; Spider was awful. He was the post man and he could not even

catch the ball and if he did he would travel or throw the ball away. But he continued to work out every day.

The first year that I was here was Spider's second year. We tied for the conference championship with East Texas but had lost our last two games to Sam Houston and Coach Jowers was mad at us and then let East Texas go to the play-offs instead of us. Spider made Honorable Mention All Conference and he continued to work out. My junior year at SWT, 1951, we won the conference championship outright and won the play-offs and went to the National Tournament in Kansas City for the first time. At the National Tournament we won our first game but lost our second game and we were through for the year. Spider made first team All Lone Star Conference.

Our senior year, we were really good. We won 30 games and lost only one and that was in a double overtime game in the quarterfinals in Kansas City. Spider had made the most valuable player in our conference and at the National Tournament. He had made the All Tournament team first team. This same guy that no one wanted was now the talk of the basketball world. "Red" Auerbach of the Boston Celtics came to our room and visited with Spider about the possibility of Spider playing with the Boston Celtics.

## **Smokin' Joe**

Joe Gullledge was a San Marcos boy who was a really good basketball and track athlete. I think he went to Texas A&M right out of high school and then went into the Navy for a few years. After he got out of the Navy he decided to try to play basketball at SWT. New Year's Eve, after the Bobcats had been working out about six hours during the day, Joe decided to go to the midnight show all by himself. He got out late and was walking up the street towards the college smoking a cigarette.

Of all things, Coach Jowers drove up and asked him if he wanted a ride back to the dorm. Joe turned down the invitation but Coach Jowers insisted—and what was Joe supposed to do with that cigarette? He could not throw it down 'cause it was after midnight and

the sparks would fly and Coach would know he was smoking. So, he just folded the cigarette up into the palm of his hand and put his hand in his pocket. No big deal.

Coach let him out at the dorm and Joe thought he had just made the great escape. He looked down into the palm of his hand the cigarette had burned a blister about the size of a silver dollar right into his palm. Next day everything went well during practice, but after a long, long practice, Coach called it quits but asked Joe to stick around for a minute. After everyone had left, Coach told Joe that he noticed that he was a little more winded than the other players and that it might be good for him to run about 10 or 15 more laps. Joe stayed late after everyone was gone and he ran all of those extra laps. Not once did Coach Jowers ever say anything about the cigarette incident.

## **Calling Dr. Bob Beaty**

Southwest Texas Won the Lone Star Conference in basketball in 1950-51. In order to advance to the National Tournament in Kansas City, we had to play the winner of the Border Conference and the winner that year was Texas Tech. I got the flu at the end of our season and was taken to the college infirmary. Coach Jowers said that I always got sick when we had to go to any play-offs. I was sick and they were giving me penicillin shots every four hours. The team started getting ready to go to Lubbock to play Texas Tech. Coach Jowers walked into the infirmary and told me to get up and get my stuff ready to go.

The nurse told Coach that I could not leave the infirmary. He wanted to know where the doctor was and was told that he was off duty and no one could approve me leaving the infirmary. Coach told the nurse that I was going and told me to get up and get my clothes on. The nurse asked Coach Jowers what he was going to do about my penicillin shots? Coach told the nurse to give him some of the needles that had the syringes attached and to put the penicillin in the syringe and someone would give me a shot when it was due. The nurse said that she would give Coach the medicine but that she would not release me.

Coach told her that was all right but I was going no matter whether I was released or not. He told the nurse that we were going to take a break in San Angelo and someone would give me a shot then. She then told Coach that I had to be able to expectorate quite a lot because I had this fever along with the flu. Coach said that he would get a coffee can for me to spit in.

I told Coach that I did not have any clothes. He told me that my roommate, Buster Gillis, had already packed a bag for me. I found out later that he had put two shirts and two pair of coveralls in a bag along with my underwear. The coveralls were the kind that carpenters use. I was supposed to go on this trip with those kinds of clothes? Coach said it would be all right. He also told Buster to find a coffee can and bring it along.

Well, I left the infirmary with my fever, my penicillin shots, and a bucket to spit in and away we went. About four or so hours later we took a break in San Angelo and they all got out of the cars except me. Coach asked the team, who could give me a shot. No one said anything for a minute and then Bob Beatey, one of our starting players, said that he had given them before. Coach asked him who he had given shots to. Bob said that he had given them to his mother until she died. Wow! I almost died right there.

Coach got out my penicillin shot and told Bob to come over there and give me a shot. Of course Bob did not want to hurt me so he just sorta put the needle up to my arm and slightly pushed and nothing happened. Coach saw what Bob was doing so he reached over and shoved Bob's hand and the needle hard down toward my arm and said, "Shove the damn thing in."

Boy, did that hurt. I looked down at my arm and some of the white penicillin was running down my arm. I told Bob to get that needle out of my arm. That shot really did hurt. I got back into the car and just laid back for a little bit until Coach told the team to board up. We headed for Lubbock. We checked into the hotel and I went to my room and put on my pajamas and went to bed. It wasn't too long until Coach came by and told me that they were going to shoot awhile and for me to get ready. I told him that I couldn't 'cause I was sick. He said, "No guts. Just stay in bed."



They left and were gone about an hour or so and came back and dressed and Coach came by and told me that they were going to eat. I told him that I could not eat. He said that I had to eat. I told him that I just could not eat and he told me to stay in bed, and, "As I told you before, you don't have any guts."

They went to eat without me and I was glad.

The next morning Coach came by and told me that I was going to eat something for breakfast. He did not care what it was but I was going to eat. I put on my coveralls and went downstairs with the team and he had some kind of soup for me. I ate most of it and got up and rushed outside as fast as I could and threw up everywhere. Then I went back to my room. About 3:00 p.m. Coach came by and said that the entire team was going to the Tech gym to shoot for about half an hour. I told him that I did not think that I could even get up. He said, "Same old story. No guts." They left and I went to sleep.

About 5:30 p.m. Coach came into my room and said the least I could do, would be to act like part of the team and go to the game. I told him that I would try. And he said that I should put my uniform on. He did not want someone just sitting there. I slowly put my uniform on and my shoes. When the team got ready to leave for the game, Buster, my old roommate, helped me down to the car. When we got to the coliseum I just went to our bench and laid down. Our team warmed up and then went down to the dressing room just before the game started and I just lay there on the bench.

The game started and Coach Jowers started Jimmy O'Banion in my place and I guess he was pretty nervous and did not play very well. After a few minutes Coach told Joe Sutton to take Jimmy's place. Well, Joe did his best but finally he dribbled the ball and kind of lost control and dribbled the thing right into the bleachers. Coach looked down the bench and said, "McDonald go in for Joe." I yelled, "COACH!"

He said, "Get in there for Joe." I checked in and played the rest of the game. Later in the second half, I got sick to my stomach and knew that I was about to throw up so I called time out. I ran over to the sideline and threw-up all over our water bottles. Coach hit the

ceiling. He screamed out, "Who called time out?" I told him that I did and he said that he was the only person responsible for calling time outs. Then he said, "If you are going to throw up, do it somewhere else other than our water bottles."

Toward the end of this game, we had a one point lead, and Tech started fouling us trying to get the ball. In those days you could shoot the free throw or take the ball out of bounds and then you just keep the ball. Well, they fouled me six or seven times and we always took the ball out of bounds. I never did get to shoot a free throw. We won the game and got to go to the National Tournament in Kansas City for the first time. Coach told me after the game that I had played a good game. I played about 75 or more games and he never told me that again.

## **Freezing a Basketball**

We played East Texas one time, when I was a senior, and we beat them about 90-50 down here. But we go up there and we played and something was not right. Game's started, the ball feels funny, the ball really feels funny. You dribble it; it would bounce way too high... "Coach, something's wrong." He said, "What's the matter?" We said, "Coach, something's wrong with the ball."

He says, "No I checked it."

Back in those days, every time we went somewhere or they came here we had two strings where if you drop the ball from this height, it's supposed to bounce back up to this height. I don't know what it was but when East Texas came to our gym, they measured that ball. We went to their gym, Coach Jowers said, "I measured the ball, it was perfect."

We said, "Coach something's not right." Well, we played and we finally beat them by just eight or nine points, it was a terrible game, terrible game. We had palmed the ball, and traveled. Years later we found out the reason for the funny feeling ball.

The coach's name was Catfish Smith and he had found out that he could freeze a basketball for a period of time and when you

dropped it from that top string it would bounce back up to the bottom string. After it warmed up you drop it here and it'd bounce sky high. We played that ballgame and when we shot the ball it would DOINGGGG! DOINNNGGGG! It was the worst game you've ever seen. He leveled, years later and said, "I thought our only chance was to do that freezing stuff even though it was cheating." Coach Jowers, if he were alive, he'd be mad right now. Whoever heard of freezing a basketball – but they did it.

**HOOOOONNNNNNNKKKKKK**

James Prewitt always stayed with Coach Jowers. Bookey Bymer and I stayed next door. We could hear them laughing at midnight. "woohooo, woohooo"

So the next day, James told us, "Coach Jowers went down and wired the horn, down the door, under the seats, to the back so we could blow the horn anytime we wanted to. He'd push that button and the horn would go 'HONK.'"

Coach told Dave Segler, "You're going to drive your car. When you're in trouble, blow the horn. If there isn't any trouble, don't blow that horn." Dave was afraid of Coach Jowers. Dave was a big, tall skinny thing and he wouldn't admit to this story to this day.

We found out that James was going to change up the stories. The horn would blow for different reasons. He first told Dave "Don't put your brake on. I think a wire is loose under there. He put the brake on and HOOOOONNNNNNKKKK.

Dave was deathly afraid of Coach Jowers. He was following Coach down the road. They got to the exit of the road and he put his foot on the break. "HOOOOONNNNNNKKKK. Coach Jowers stopped and looked back. He didn't say anything and we drove a little ways and we went about 15 or 20 minutes. Coach Jowers was already acting like he was mad. Dave was scared to death. He put his foot on the break and nothing happened.

James said, "The wire has fallen off the brake and the problem might be with the clutch. Be careful of the clutch now." We got to the next town and there was a red light up there and the car had a stick shift thing, Dave put his foot on the clutch and HOOOOONNNNNK-KKKK. Prewitt said, "Don't touch the clutch." So Dave is downshifting, Clang, Claw, Dannng, Clang. He can't put on the brake. James said, "Don't touch that clutch." CLANG, we just shot out of there with no clutch. We drove miles and miles and miles. We waited until we had to pass a car.

James said, "You get close to that car and the horn is going to blow." Dave asked, "Well how am I going to pass it?"

James replied, "You can't, just listen, the horn is going to blow. Go ahead and try it."

And we pass this car with the horn going HOOOOONNNNNNKKKK.

James said, "I told you so, don't pass the car."

We get close to Coach's car and we pulled over and the horn goes, HOOOOOONNNNNNNKKKK.

Dave was straddling the center line and the horn was blowing. Coach Jowers stopped, got out of the car and said, "Dave, I told you not to blow the damn horn. You get out here. You drive my car and I'll drive this car. We're going to see what happens."

Dave said, "It's not me coach, it's this car."

So they switch cars.

When the car got close to another car, the horn blows. Coach Jowers passes another car and nothing happens. The horn doesn't blow. He slows down and lets Dave pass him. Dave says, "I knew damn well that horn wasn't going to blow with him driving it." Of course not, nobody had their foot on the line honking the horn. So they switch back. The cars were close together. Dave gets in and starts the car. When he starts it, the horn is HOOOOOONNNNNNNKKKKK. Dave puts the car in reverse—eeeerrrrrrreee. This goes on for hours and hours and hours, and miles and miles. Finally we stop for gas. I don't know where. Dave was sitting in the seat, sideways and looked

down. They had put a piece of chewing gum paper over the button. Dave sees it and says, "What's this?" He picked up that gum and hit that button HOOOOONNNNNKKK. He's been mad ever since.

Coach Jowers went right along with it.

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## **Springing and Dunking**

Coach loved to go up to our old gym floor early before practice actually started and just shoot baskets himself. Well, some of us would also go up early to shoot or watch him and Assistant Coach Chico Gensberg, shoot long shots from mid-court and shoot them from between their legs, like most people shot free throws back then. Both coaches could get the ball up to the rim pretty good and would actually make one every now and then. Some of us would shoot with them and always from center court.

Well, one day Bob Beaty found a springboard that gymnasts used. He and I put the board near the basketball backboard and proceeded to get a ball and run up to the springboard and jump off it and dunk the ball. No one on our team could even dunk the ball other than Spider. We were having great fun and Coach Jowers came up the steps to do his mid court shooting and stood there and watched us dunk and he laughed for a while. All of a sudden he shouted at us to stop that springing and dunking. We had almost bent the rim straight down and practice was about to start. He told us to get that rim straight before it was time to practice. We did not know what to do and finally Bob got one of the benches that we sat on during the game brought it over to the basket, and he and I took the end of it and put it under the rim and shoved and shoved until we finally got the rim sort of straight like it was supposed to be. Needless to say, that was our last springing and dunking.

## Broken Jaw

During our senior year, we were headed for the NAIA Tournament and practicing very hard. At one practice, Pence Dacus hit me on the jaw pretty hard. I went over to Jowers and told him that something was wrong with my jaw. He scowled, "There's nothing wrong with you — especially when the bottom and the top teeth clamp down OK." I answered, "That's just it Coach, they don't."

Yes, my jaw was broken. It was about a month before the tournament. I had my jaw set by having a dentist wire my lower jaw and upper jaw together. I could take nourishment by taking in liquids through my overbite in front of my mouth. For the next month, I went to Jowers home. There, I would have a glass of pork chops, a glass of green beans, etc. They would cook the food and then blend the cooked ingredients so that I could "drink" the blended product. That's how Jowers took care of his "boys" when the chips were down. I got to go to the National Tournament because of these actions.

*Submitted by Bookey Brymer*

## Nice Shot!

On one of our first out-of-town basketball trips, we went to play Howard Payne College. I had gone to school there one year, and couldn't get a scholarship, so I wanted to beat them real bad.

During the game, I was dribbling to the right, and on impulse, threw up a left-handed shot. Jowers jumped up and yelled, "Brymer, what the h---," the shot went right into the goal — he continued, "Nice Shot!" I had never shot a left-handed shot before and never since!

The next morning we all proceeded to a restaurant for breakfast. I had never eaten out much, too poor, so I ordered eggs, bacon, a stack of pancakes, and some oatmeal, along with some milk and coffee. When Jowers went to pay the bills for each of us, he looked at the ticket for my meal, not knowing who it was and asked the cashier, "Is this meal for three people?" The cashier pointed at me and replied, "No, just for him." Jowers turned around to me, with his

usual scowl, and blurted out, "Well, I guess I'll be ordering for you from now on!"

*Submitted by Bookey Brymer*

## **Lights in the Ceiling**

One of our trips to play Sul Ross was an eventful one. We had to travel several hundred miles just to get there. I remember several of Jowers caustic remarks to keep us on our toes. After getting there, we were walking around to get over the long trip. J.C. (Spider), Maze and I walked up the road for a while. We heard someone yelling at us. Looking back, we saw some of our team members yelling and waving; we just waved back and kept walking. As it turned out, we actually walked up a fairly steep hill. When we got back, Jowers jumped all over us. He surmised that we had ruined our legs for the game by walking that far in a higher altitude.

At the end of the first half of the game, we were ahead of Sul Ross by 30 points – 45 to 15. As we walked to the locker room, I remarked to Mac, "We're ahead by three times their score—what can Jowers find wrong with that?"

Well, he did. He tore into us with, "I have just witnessed the sorriest game of defense ever. Any team that would allow 15 points in a half to a team like that isn't worth being on the court!" He continued, "Bookey, the only defense you are showing is when the lights in the ceiling bounce off your bald head into their eyes!" We felt duly chastised. Jowers was never pleased.

*Submitted by Bookey Brymer*

## **Drinking Cokes at Half-time**

The Bobcats played Sul Ross out at Alpine. At the half we had them 49-6. Bookey Brymer said that the score was 49-15 but it was 49-6. That's the story I have in our scorebook. At the half we went in and Coach Jowers, you know, he always checked the score, made sure what the fouls were on our team, as we're downstairs. They

have Cokes sitting around for us to drink and I kick my Coke over accidentally. So I had a towel and got down on my hands and knees to clean the floor up. Coach came in says, "That's the way, McDonald, we get a nice lead and you start acting like an idiot. Get up and get on the bench. You get a lead and you don't know how to take it."

I said to myself, *it looks like we aren't going to have fun tonight*. I think they made twenty points; we let down the second half.

## Phone Call

In 1952 Coach Jowers called a team meeting one afternoon that met in his room in our hotel. He was going over all the details that he had planned for the game that night and when he was about in the middle of his pregame meeting, the phone rang and rang and he finally answered. He said, "Hello, yes and we are in a meeting but here he is." He turned and said to Jimmy O'Banion, "Pam, your girlfriend wants to say hi." Jim was sorta stunned and said, "Yes" and, "No" and did not say too many words and shortly said, "See you later." And hung up. Everyone in the room knew that Jimmy's girlfriend had called at a most inopportune time and all the other players took deep breaths and were so glad that their girlfriend had not called. Bad timing.

*Submitted by Jimmy O'Banion*

## Another Story

I, Jimmy O'Banion, remember Coach Jowers' pregame talk before the game that we lost in the National Tournament. We had already won 29 straight games and were getting ready to play a team in Missouri that was from Missouri. Coach knew that the crowd was going to be for Southwest Missouri and we were going to be in for a really hard game. He told us, "You are nearly all seniors and you'll never get another chance to play a basketball game of this importance in the rest of your lives. Remember this and play your best." He said



that we could never return to this place again but that we would have a chance tonight so we needed to play our best because this was going to be it. Jimmy said that he would always remember that speech and that game since we lost the game in two overtimes.

*Submitted by Jimmy O'Banion*

## **Confidence**

The one game that we lost in Kansas City was in the second overtime when we were behind two points with less than one minute to play. Coach Jowers called timeout and told us a specific play to run to get Jimmy O'Banion open for the last shot. We ran the play and Jimmy took and made the shot to tie the game up, even though they came back and scored just before the end of the overtime to defeat the Bobcats. It showed how much confidence Coach Jowers had in Jimmy.

## **Playing the Jowers Way**

Well, Coach Jowers was like ol' Patton or something. I know one time we were playing a team and I was in the stands keeping score. There was a kid from Corpus Christi who had 16 points in the first half. Coach told James Prewitt, "Prewitt, I'm going to start you the last half and I want you to stop that guy." Before the ball was even thrown up, Prewitt leveled him. They took him downstairs and he came up with his nose all taped up. Well see, that wasn't nice and wasn't fair, but that was the way Jowers played.

I remember another time in practice when Bookey Brymer hit me with an elbow, and cut a big gash over my eye. Blood started trickling down my face and about the time we were finishing practice, I finally looked down and the blood was on my shoes. Coach Jowers never said a word. But when he passed me, he said very tersely, "You'd better go over there and get that fixed up." He was meaner than what they call a junkyard dog. You couldn't help but admire his winning.

You would go to the state tournament and out of 24 teams playing, about 8–10 would be coached by Coach Jowers' former players. That's how well he taught the game. Even his players were successful coaches.

*Submitted by Bill Barber*

## **Little Guys that Shot from the Outside**

I was hitting the basket pretty good in practice. And in fact, I hit it better than anybody. I really did. One day Coach came up to me and said, "Play defense." I said, "Coach I'm a shooter." Then he said, "Well today, you're a runner." And he made me run all around the gym. I could never understand why he wanted me to pass the ball to somebody that couldn't catch it, but he did. If I did what he asked and listened to him and worked with him on it, I could have learned how to feed the ball. Well, I did. I knew how to feed the ball to somebody, but I wanted to be the star. He didn't want stars. He didn't want little guys that shot from outside, you know.

So at the end of my second year, he called me in and said, "I'm going to have to take your half scholarship away from you because I got to get me some height in here. You didn't grow like you were supposed to."

The start of that third year I was going across the quad, up on the hill, and I saw Jowers. He said, "Where have you been?" It just scared me to death. "Coach, you cut me off." He just turned on his heel and walked off.

I wondered if he wanted me out again, so I waited – waited all year. I came out the next year, but it just wasn't the same. He just wouldn't, he just kept cutting me off, about every two weeks he'd say, "You coming back?" And I'd come back and beg him and he'd let me stay out just a little bit longer. Then I got my draft notice and I went up to him and said, "I'm getting drafted." He replied, "Good." I didn't know what he meant by that. He was just glad that I was getting out of his hair, I guess.

*Submitted by Bill Barber*

## Kicked Off Record

I stood in his door and I said, "Coach, I'm back from the army and I've got a GI Bill and I don't need a scholarship but I'd like to be on the team and help out all I can." Coach Jowers got out of his chair, walked by me, and then walked out of the building. Didn't say a word. It hurt my feelings, so I walked out in a minute and there he was just standing there in the hall. I went out to my car and big ol' tears coming out of my eyes, thinking he really doesn't want me. I thought I'd just go and get me a girlfriend. I did and she married me.

I received an honorary letter about ten years after he died. The only thing I can lay claim to is that I have been kicked off more than anybody else.

*Submitted by Bill Barber*

## Scholarship Discussions

Bill Barber was on a half scholarship and there was this guy named Dickerson, a football player on a half scholarship also. Bill thought he had a really good year and Dickerson thought he had a really good year too. So they decided to go downstairs and talk to Coach Jowers about the possibilities of getting a full scholarship.

So they decided the football player should go first. So Bill sits on the steps in this old gym. And he listens.

Dickerson: "Coach Jowers?"

Jowers: "What do you want?"

Dickerson: "Coach Jowers, I've had a pretty good year this year."

Jowers: "So, what do you want?"

Dickerson: "Coach, what do you think about giving me a full scholarship next year?"

Jowers: "Full Scholarship! Giving you a half is like pouring water down a rat hole. Get your ass out of here!"

He walked outside and ol' Bill is sitting there and Coach Jowers says,

"What are you looking for Barber?"

Barber, "Nothing, I'm just waiting for Dickerson."

*Submitted by Bill Barber*

## **40 Points a Game**

Southwest Texas had a big old boy named Bill Banks. Bill would score 15 to 25 points almost every game. Coach Jowers was never satisfied with Bill's game no matter how well Bill had played. Coach thought that Bill was satisfied with his amount of scoring and Coach Jowers chewed on him constantly. He told Bill that he should score 40 points and then Coach would be satisfied.

Sure enough, Bill scored 39 points in consecutive games. He went to Coach Jowers and asked, "Coach, are you satisfied now?" Coach answered, "You could score 40 points, so go back to work." It seemed to Bill that Coach Jowers was never satisfied.

**"So?"**

I hitchhiked from Corpus to San Marcos to try out for a scholarship at SWT. I found out that Coach Jowers lived in Bobcat #1, so I went to the address and knocked on his door. When he came to the door I said, "I'm Bobby Roberts." Jowers replied, "So?"

I told him I was there to try out for a scholarship. He told me to be on the gym floor at 2:30 that afternoon. I asked him where the gym was and he pointed and said, "Over the hill there" and slammed the door in my face. At that point I wanted to go back home, but decided I had made the trip so I would go for it. After working out with the other players for two days, Coach Jowers said he would offer me a half scholarship. I asked what that meant and he said, "You dummy — a half means a half." I told him Coach George from San Angelo had offered me a full scholarship and he said, "Go to San Angelo."

He said he would get me a job at the maintenance department so I would have enough money to pay for the other half. Since San Marcos was closer to home and I knew I would have to hitchhike back and forth, I decided to accept his offer. I worked until midnight every night cleaning floors at the maintenance department. Finally, at midterm, he gave me a full scholarship.

During spring training my freshman year, Bill Banks set a screen on me and I jammed my hand on his hip. I continued to practice for a week and my hand proceeded to swell and turn black and blue. I went to Coach Jowers and showed him my hand and said it hurt bad. He called me a tiddy baby and said to go see Dr. Scheib. Dr. Scheib x-rayed it and said it was broken. He put a cast on it and I went back and told all the guys that I would probably be going to Sewell Park every day, watching the girls while the guys were practicing. The next day I showed Coach Jowers the cast on my hand, expecting him to say, "OK, you don't have to work out." WRONG! He said, "Go suit out." I never missed a practice, dribbling the ball with my uncasted hand and balancing the ball on the cast on my broken hand when shooting the ball.

My senior year, during the Christmas holidays, I came down with the measles. I told Coach Jowers that Dr. Scheib said I had the measles. He said, "So what?" Again, covered with red spots, I never missed practice.

We practiced about three hours one morning and then went to Austin and scrimmaged UT. We didn't play well, so when we got back to San Marcos, Coach Jowers told us to suit out and we practiced again that night. We used to cuss him every day after practice for working us so hard, but after graduation, we all respected him and thought of him as a second father. He did everything he could to help us find good jobs and after becoming a coach myself, I patterned my style of coaching after Coach Jowers. I still consider him "the greatest."

*Submitted by Bobby Roberts*

## The Texas Lutheran College Football Banner

Southwest Texas had three freshmen in 1953 who were always in some kind of trouble. These three boys were Bobby Roberts, Bill Krueger, and Bill O'Banion. They were truly Coach Jowers' boys. They never did anything bad, but it usually was almost bad. This happened at many of the football games. Coach Jowers sweated them out because he didn't know if they would make it through the first semester or not.

We played Texas Lutheran College in football that first semester they were here. During the game three to four TLC boys walked around the football field carrying the TLC banner. The three freshmen saw the banner coming and instantly started trying to figure out how they could get it. They hid behind the stands and as the banner reached the point where the boys were, they jumped out and quickly grabbed it, jerking it away from the TLC boys. The three ran away as fast as they could. After much shoving, pushing, and fighting, they managed to escape with the banner and their lives. Once again, they got out of a tough situation.

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*



*Three Freshmen Outlaws and Coach McDonald – Bill Krueger, Bill O'Banion, Vernon McDonald, Bobby Roberts*

## The AXE

We were playing Stephen F. Austin, the team was the lumberjacks, and everybody had axes, except the main lumberjack and he had an axe that was 6 feet high and the blade was 4 feet wide. He was walking around like a lumberjack. When it was time for Stephen F. to come out of the dressing room to make the victory line. The mascot was the last guy. What do you think Krueger said, "They've got their backs to us, let's get the axe!"

It had been misty and raining, so the field was kind of wet. So our 3 Musketeers sneak up behind their backs. Krueger said, "I'm going to grab that thing." And he took off running. Just before he got there, the mascot saw ol' Krueger and it had been misty and Krueger took off running, slipped and his feet end up in the air, the mascot saw him. The mascot leaned over him with the axe held high and Krueger said, "Please, please... don't hit me."

If he hadn't been a good player, Coach Jowers would have run him off. They were in trouble every day. Coach Jowers said, "I'll be glad when football is over with, those guys will never make the season."

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## The Lamar Cardinal

The basketball team went to Beaumont to play football. Bobby Roberts, Bill Krueger and Bill O'Banion went down to see the game. Here comes a fraternity carrying the mascot, a cardinal. There are about six to ten boys carrying it around, above their heads. The band starts to play the national anthem.

The Lamar group puts the Cardinal on the ground and turned their back to it to hear the national anthem. Roberts, Krueger, O'Banion, and Tom Milford said, "Let's get that cardinal while their backs are turned." During the playing of the national anthem, with everybody standing at attention, the SWT guys crouch down and walk toward the cardinal. They each one take a corner of that paper mache cardinal. As they were picking it up, they are moaning, "uuuummmmm." When they quit playing the national anthem, the Lamar

fraternity boys turned around and saw the SWT guys trying to steal the cardinal. Realizing this, Roberts, Krueger, and O'Banion all broke and ran. Unfortunately Ol' Milford had his back to them and didn't see his teammates start to run. He just heard Bobby say, "Run! Run!" As he ran away, Bobby heard Tom getting whacked.

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## **The Goose Story**

I, Vernon McDonald, am THE freshman coach and I have THE freshman team. Those freshmen were Bobby Roberts, Bill Krueger, and Bill O'Banion. They were my three guards, and I have Joe Cole and one other player. The big ones weren't trouble, but it was these three who were constantly in trouble. I want to tell you about four or five of them that it's a wonder didn't get thrown in jail every week. Never anything bad but always right on the cotton-picking edge.

In San Marcos years ago, down by the Sewell Park bridge, there was an apartment complex just above on stilts. I forget what the name was, but it was on stilts. These three guys killed a duck up there once.

The duck they killed had got a long neck. It wasn't a duck—it was a Swan! It was one of those swans that weighs about 40 pounds! Krueger says, "I'll go get my car." (He was probably the only one with a car on the whole team I guess). While Krueger and Bobby get the car, Bill O'Banion was stuck with the dead goose/swan—except that the swan ain't dead.

Krueger and Roberts drove up with the car and called for Bill. Just then, that swan goes "HONK, HONK, HONK, HONK" and O'Banion slapped that duck, hitting it and Bobby watching this just takes off. There's O'Banion hitting the swan and Roberts is under those houses hiding. They made a circle around and now think the swan's dead. They pull up and whisper "Bill, Bill." And Bill answers, "Yeah, Yeah." And the swan, "HONK, HONK, HONK" and he hits it again.

That swan still isn't dead. And they take off again! There's the dead thing and every time they take off, the thing goes "HONK,



HONK” and they hit it again. They start beating it with a stick. They finally beat that son of a gun to death and they bring it to my wife.

The players say, “Ms. McDonald, we just killed a duck. Could you cook it?”

She says “I never have, but if you bring it over, we’ll try it.” It was 12 feet long. When the players arrive, Dolores asks, “What is that?” The players answered, “It’s a duck.” Dolores said, “It doesn’t look like a duck to me.”

We turned the oven on and we couldn’t lift the darn thing. She had those long wings and we couldn’t get the swan in the oven. Dolores said, “What do I do with it now?” She cooked that thing for hours and hours and finally the players came back and said to Dolores, “Thanks Mrs. McDonald, but the Bobcats are playing in Huntsville tonight and we’re going to the game.” They drove off and left my wife with a huge mess.

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease’s house*

## **Driving to the Game**

Bill Krueger had his own car while he was in school. Not many of our players had their own car, but Bill did. He kept nagging Coach Jowers to let him take his car on one of our road trips because he would like to earn that mileage that was paid for taking your car. The per diem mileage in those days was seven cents per mile. We were going to Alpine to play Sul Ross, which was about 400 miles each way, and Bill began asking Coach Jowers if he could take his car. He could just see all that money coming in.

Coach told him that he could take his car and also the team which was six players including Bill. About two thirds of the way to Alpine, Bill’s car had a blowout and Bill had to buy another tire. So far it’s not too bad, but on the way back another tire blew out. Now Bill had to buy another tire. He told Coach Jowers after we had returned that he did not want to take his car anymore.

## Water-skiing

Bill Krueger was a good skier... supposedly. There was a guy named Dave Ross from Lano. Good little ol' basketball player, but he was a great water-skier. They went up with Dave Ross and he was going to show them how to pro ski. Dave, sits down on the dock, they start the motor up, shiiiiiii, that son of a gun takes off, swish swish, skies, skies, Dave came back in and he was dry as a bone. He throws the rope and swiiiiisssssh. He hits the bank and walks in.

Krueger says, "I can do that." He sat down there on the bank, grabbed the rope and yelled, "Let her go!" He takes off, goes swish, swish, came back in and threw the rope. The next thing he sees, hitting the bank, he's in a tree. That nut is going a hundred miles an hour and then goes up into the tree and over it. He tore up everything he had.

He came in and Coach Jowers saw him and said, "What happened to you?"

Krueger said, "We were in a car wreck."

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## Road Trips

On road trips, Coach Jowers would go hours before stopping for a pit stop. Joe Cole devised a plan. The driver of the JV mobile would pull the choke as far as it would go and the car would continue to run. We could see the gas gauge quickly go from full to empty. After filling the car, we would drive about 100 miles and then motion to Coach Jowers that we were low on gas. Coach never let on if he actually knew what we were doing. But, who knows?

We returned to San Marcos early Sunday morning after being defeated by Louisiana Tech. It was Christmas and time for break. Our Christmas break was two-a-days and beans and corn bread at the Old Penn Hotel. We arrived at the gym Sunday afternoon and discovered the rims had been removed! Coach put eight balls on the court for the sixteen of us and said to start dribbling. I learned more basketball in those two weeks than any other time in my life.

On a trip to San Antonio in the JV mobile, Joe Ammerman was driving. He passed Coach Jowers. I said to Joe, "What in the hell are you doing? You just passed the old man." Joe panicked, almost wrecked the car. He could have killed us all.

On a cold night in February 1955, the team was returning from Kingsville where we had defeated the Texas A&I Javelins. Due to the remote area, the AM radio began to cut out. Banging on the window had improved the reception in the past, so I started banging on the window again. To my surprise and horror, the window shattered! This was the window in the JV mobile. When we returned to San Marcos, I walked down the stairs at the Bobcat Gym in the dark. There was a dim light shining from under Coach Jowers' door. I knocked. Coach Jowers said, "Come in. What in the hell do you want?!" I told him that Bobby Roberts and I had been wrestling in the car and accidentally broken a window in the JV mobile. Bobby was his pet and I knew punishment would be less with him involved. Sorry Bobby.

*Submitted by Bill Krueger*

## **Weigh In**

I was on the basketball team for four years but I didn't get to play a lot. I traveled with the team a lot just because of Coach Jowers. I had gotten married my junior year and my senior year I was in between playing basketball or not and he said, 'I tell you what I'll do. You come out for basketball and I'll letter you. That way it'll help you get a job.' I said OK. So I came out for basketball my senior year. We won the conference and we got to go to Kansas City to the National Tournament. He called me in and he said, "Tell you what, I'm gonna weigh you the day we leave and if you don't weigh 175 pounds, you're not going." I had played football at about 185 pounds so I had some to loose and sure enough, he was true to his word.

He weighed me. And I made it. And I think what he was really doing was testing me to see if I would do that because I think he had something in mind down the road and that was bringing me back to Southwest Texas to coach.

*Submitted by Dr. Keith Hoffman*

## Lewis Working at the Hardware Store

I finished up my eligibility in football and then I finished up my eligibility in track. I had played football for two years. Along in spring Coach called me in. This was the conversation.

Jowers: "Lewis, are you going to graduate?"

Lewis: "Yes"

Jowers: "Well, why don't you drop a class and come back and play football. We'd love to have you."

Lewis: "Coach, I can't, I'm getting married and I need a job."

Jowers: "If you took a PE course, you could be back here playing football."

Lewis: "Well, I'm not taking a PE course."

Jowers: "Well, go ahead and do what you want to, but sure would like to have you back."

So, I graduated and got married. I planned on finding a job around in this area teaching school, because I had to go to ROTC classes. He had fixed me up so that I'd go two years, then one year, and then finally get out to keep me out of the draft. So I couldn't find a job. I checked every school in the area, so Linda said, "I guess we can put you back on at the hardware store." So I was at the hardware store and the telephone rang and I happened to answer it. I said, "Hello."

Jowers: "Lewis is that you?"

Lewis: "Yes sir."

Jowers: "Well, Mr. Mooney is looking for somebody over at Prairie Lea. I need to call him up." Then he hung up.

I called Mr. Mooney up and he said, "Come on over." It was dark when I got over there and he took me around to meet the board members and they hired me that night. Saved my life.

*Submitted by Lewis Gilcrease*

Nobody could guard that Lewis. I saw him get 45, 49 points in a game. This was a 6 foot post man. Coach Jowers always said he had an "Educated Butt." He did. If you ever got behind Lewis, you were stuck there. He'd push you this way and he'd push this way, and the first thing you know, he was going to the goal, and here you are,

trying to guard him and couldn't. Then he'd fall out. Lewis would shoot and then fall down and get free throws. He got more free throws than anyone else in SWT history.

## **What's In a Name?**

One time he called me to his office after Don "Turkey" Forester had talked to him about someone forging his name during registration. He put the fear of God into Forester and he then coughed up my name to Jowers. Coach told me to shut the door and then asked me if I had forged his name to get me and some other players through the registration line faster. I confessed, and then he asked if I was planning on forging any checks with his name on it. I was scared to death and muttered something real incoherent. He looked at me, halfway smiled, and said, "You are shook up enough, get your ass out of here."

*Submitted by Rudy Davalos*

## **Smokin' Cigarettes**

Coach Jowers called me to his office and shut the door. He asked me how long had I been smoking? I told him I did not smoke, now or ever. He said he found cigarette butts outside of his office and they were dropped from my dorm window. I told him again, that I did not smoke. He said you better tell me the truth. I said I was telling the truth. Of course he knew my two roommates were Jack Worthington and Charlie Sharp. Rather than take a chance it was Charlie, he told me to get my ass out of the office and that was that. Never heard from him again on the matter. By the way, both Jack and Charlie smoked a lot.

*Submitted by Rudy Davalos*

## Derby Hat

We're playing A&I. They had a pretty good ball club. We were staying at some old hotel down there. Coach Jowers and I went outside to talk. The team was just sitting there. We started walking. We walked all the way to town.

Coach Jowers said, "I've never had a team so uptight in my life. I've got a talented team but they are so uptight. That's how you get your butt kicked. Just look at them, they're sitting there all tight. Just then we passed by a store and in the window there was a derby hat with a narrow rim on it—the ugliest thing.

Coach Jowers said, "We're going to buy some derby hats. We're going to wear them." I said, "I'm not buying that hat." Coach said, "I'm buying them." I said, "I'm not going to wear it." Jowers said, "Yes, you're going to wear it."

So we went inside and bought two of those little derby hats. When we went back, those guys almost fell off of the porch laughing at us. I looked bad, but I looked at Coach Jowers and he looked terrible, just terrible. We wore those things—we went to the game—we both had them on during the game. We kicked the living dog out of them. It was so bad. Everybody was laughing and scoring.

Coach Jowers said, "That worked, we're just going to keep wearing these hats."

McDonald: "I'm not going to wear this hat.

"Jowers: "Yes you are."

And I did. We won, and we won, and we won, and we won. We won a bunch of games.

We went over to Sam Houston and got beat. After the game and while we're driving home, Coach Jowers said, "I believe that my derby hat has lost all of its power" and he just tossed the thing out the car window. We drove all the way to San Marcos. Two guys come up behind us in their car and said, "Here Coach, we found your hat!"

Jowers: "I don't want that thing."

Davalos took it upstairs and had a little ceremony over the wastebasket as he burned it up.

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## Avoiding a Speeding Ticket

After scrimmaging TAMU in San Marcos Wednesday before Thanksgiving my junior year, I was on my way to Stephenville on 183 between Austin and Lampasas. Running about 90 in my three carb '58 Chevy (Bruce will probably ask – Why so slow?). I met a cop and, of course, he turned around and hit his lights. He saw my SWT sticker and asked why I was going home so late. I told him that my coach and the TAMU coach wouldn't call it quits and the scrimmage went on and on. He asked, do you play for Milton Jowers and I said, "Yes."

His response, "Son, I know about him and you've been through enough today if you played for him. Just take it easy going home!"

*Submitted by Bob Henson*

## Orbit Time

The other incident, which sticks in my mind, happened during my senior year. This one is true Jowers. But first, if you all will remember, Jowers stepped down at the end of the '61 season, my junior year, and Mac took over. Well, I had two years of playing behind Boonie (and guarding that damned "pogo stick" every day of the week) and one year when we went back to Kansas City. I had a good KC tourney my junior year and averaged 17 points (under Jowers). But never a word from him—I don't believe any of us expected it from him, but it would have been nice every now and then. In fact, I can't remember ever getting a compliment from him, except for the one this story is about.

What I did get and probably earned was 1) endless, and I mean endless, trips around the inside of the gym—"All right freshmen, JB (and other names he chose for me), it's ORBIT TIME" (between Howard and me, we wore grooves around the outside of the court). 2) "Sit down until you can learn to hustle after the ball, or back on defense." 3) "If you didn't spend so much time in that friggin' lab, you might learn how to play this game." (Remember I was a Chemistry major and I DID have labs, unlike Charlie, who came late with NO labs.)

All this leads back to the incident in my senior year. Obviously, I'd not been among his favorites in that I truly believe he didn't think I was coming close to meeting my potential. Well, we'd just finished beating East Texas in our gym, and we knew how Jowers loved East Texas, and I had had a real good and tough game. Seems like I got about 22 points and about a dozen rebounds. Many of the points were driving layups where I got fouled a bunch and banged around pretty good – Jowers kind of basketball!

Coach came up to me after the game, remember he was not the coach my senior year, looked up at me (was he only about 5 foot 9 inches? Somehow he seemed taller, didn't he?) with that wry smile of his and said, "Well JB, you finally played yourself a basketball game!"

I walked away with very mixed emotions: the first being, you SOB, it took you long enough to recognize that I can play this god-damned game and then say it; the other emotion was that I was simply elated. I remembered that compliment and situation to this day. I finally pleased the bastard.

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Henson*

## **Weight Requirements**

The first incident was in September 1958, the beginning of my freshman year. To regress a bit, I had met Jowers twice before. The first time was when he saw me play in the Regional AA Tourney in Refugio and offered me a scholarship, and the second was after the state tennis meet when I stopped by San Marcos simply to see the campus. Though I was not required to "try out" for my scholarship (damn I was good), you (Mac) and some of the others (probably Frank Miller, Art Howe, and Bruce Gregg) convinced me to get involved in spring training practice. I did have to show you what I could do, you know?

Both of the times I met him I weighed 175–180. When I reported at the first of September, I was at a svelte 205! (Lots of good tortillas in the Valley that summer.) I walked in the office area, at the gym, and



the first person I ran into was Coach. I greeted him profusely and he looked at me with absolutely no recognition. I then said: "Coach, it's me, Bobby Henson, you know, from the Valley." Hell, I was expecting the proverbial red carpet. After all, I had been recruited heavily and was told by Coach in a letter over the summer that he was expecting me to be his "sixth man" my freshman year. Sadly, being from Edcouch Elsa, I didn't have any idea what the hell a sixth man was. I'm not sure we even had six men!

After my energetic greeting and then his total lack of recognition, Coach said, "Bobby Henson? You look like one of my friggin' tackles. I'm going to run your ass off if you don't get down to your playing weight by the time the season starts, and by the way, that's about 180." Well I certainly felt wanted at old SWT after that exchange! And, just for the record, he did run my ass off, but not the way he meant at the time. I did get down to about 185 within a few weeks.

From this inglorious start, I, just like Howard Lockhard, was on Jowers "s--- list". He quickly changed my God-given name from IB to JB (for Jug Butt—our nickname for those lower forms of life on the other side of the gym). Of course, folks like Bruce and Frank have never let JB die. We all know they were both jealous that I could stand out in a small central Texas breeze and not get completely blown away by it all!

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Henson*

## **24-Hour Practices**

We were playing in Alpine. If you guys remember, on Thursday before the trip, we would workout at the regular time and then come back at seven that same night and workout. Then drive to Alpine the next morning and workout before we had dinner.

We also did a lot of walking on the trip to Alpine. Every two or three hours, Coach would stop the cars and put us out to walk while he would drive on down the road and wait for us. We won the game on Saturday by a large score. The first five played most of the game. At the hotel Jack Worthington asked Coach Jowers why the second

five didn't get to play much. Coach Jowers response was, "Y'all did look good in practice." Jack's response was "Which practice? We worked out three times in less than 24 hours!" Coach Jowers just looked at Jack and then starting laughing.

*Submitted by Harper Augsburger*

## 50th Anniversary of 1952 Team



*Left to right: Dr. Jerome Supple (president of SWT), Melford Turner, James Prewitt, Spider Maze, Vernon McDonald, Lewis Gilcrease, Pence Dacus, Connie Sherley, Joe Ammerman, Bill Barber, Bookey Bryner, Jimmy O'Banion, Joe Peery, John Weder and Joe Sutton.*

## Can't Go

Just before the 1959 and 1960 NAIA National Basketball Tournament, Coach Jowers asked Coach Strahan if he would approve of Lloyd Little going to Kansas City with the basketball team. Coach Strahan said no on both occasions. Strahan told me that I was on a track scholarship and he needed me to participate in the Border Olympics for SWT. I probably would not have helped the basketball team as these teams were very talented and they finished third in 1959 and first in 1960. I won the high jump in 1959 and 1960 and I

think I set a Border Olympic high jump record in 1959 and had the top jump in the NAIA that year. I did appreciate Coach Jowers asking Coach Strahan anyway.

*Submitted by Lloyd Little*

## **Finger-Lickin' Chicken**

One year when the Bobcats were playing in the National Basketball Tournament, the sponsor of our team asked Coach Jowers if he could take the entire team to the roof of some big-time restaurant and feed the players. Coach told him he surely could and then proceeded to tell the team to go put on their Sunday best clothes 'cause we were going to eat with the big shots in Kansas City. We did eat on the top floor of some very tall building and the food was scrumptious. When we were through eating all the players went by the sponsor and shook his hand and thanked him for the wonderful meal. Everything was fine until one of our players, Chuck Trcka, shook this man's hand and told him that it was the best chicken that he had ever eaten. The sponsor sorta coughed and told Chuck that he was glad that he liked it but that it was not chicken. It was pheasant under glass. Coach almost gagged when he heard what was going on. It was really good though.

## **Record for Running Laps**

Rudy Davalos and I got into a pushing and shoving match during practice one day, the year of the National Championship. It was always tough guarding Rudy not only because he was good, but also because he was boney and pushed off with his hands a lot. He would also talk at you. I guess it's what is known as "trash talk" today. Anyway, during this particular practice Rudy had become pretty disgusted with me. I suspect Coach was noticing. I don't remember exactly what Coach Jowers saw. But that was it! Immediately, he ordered Rudy to run 50 laps (a record?) while the rest of us continued to practice.

Adding insult to injury, Rudy had to call out the number of the lap each time around as he passed the Coach, and loud enough so we could all hear it. Rudy was seething in anger, as you can imagine, but after 50 laps he was too tired to care any more. By the way, Rudy tells this story at my expense (I was the guilty party and got by with it). I tell it at his expense.

*Submitted by Dr. Donnie Schmeltekopf*

## **Basketball – SWT Style**

The most memorable story I have about Coach Jowers occurred in 1954 during the fall of my freshman year. I was playing for Vernon McDonald but Jowers needed a warm body to play defense during a scrimmage against Joe Cole. I drew the short straw.

Things went well for about five minutes until I contested a rebound with Joe. Joe nailed me with an elbow above my right eye. Stunned with blood squirting, I could see Jowers running across the floor to help me. When he got there he yelled, “Freshman, get off my floor – you’re bleeding on my floor.”

Joe Gonzales took me to the dressing room, put a butterfly bandage on the cut and I went back out to defend Cole. That was my introduction to basketball – SWT style.

*Submitted by Lanny Vlasak*

## **All-American Blankety-Blank**

The second story involved Charlie Sharp. This incident occurred at the end of spring practice, after we had won the National Championship. To cap off spring practice, we had a game between the graduating seniors and the upcoming team. The seniors included not only Charlie, but also Rudy, Howard, and Boonie. It was a very close game. At some point in the second half, Charlie got the ball in the post position and I was right there on him, sagging off Rudy. I was giving Charlie fits trying to steal the ball from him – my hands were moving fast. Suddenly, the ball came to me and then Charlie

took a full roundhouse swing in frustration. I ducked just in time to see his big arm and hand go just over my head.

Well, immediately Coach Jowers yelled at Charlie and told him that just because he was an “All American Blankety-Blank” that didn’t prevent him from being kicked off the team. Needless to say, Charlie settled down.

I think both of these stories illustrate one reason why Coach Jowers was so highly respected by his players. The stars on the team were not going to be treated with soft gloves or with favoritism. At some basic level, we were all equal in his eyes. And, for those of us who were not the stars, understanding that Coach Jowers communicated by his actions, as shown in these two stories, made all of us feel that we were genuinely an important part of the team.

*Submitted by Dr. Donnie Schmeltekopf*

## **No Water Breaks**

We were working out one day, going half court. It was a very hot day. It’s very easy to get cottonmouth on a hot intense day. Jowers had me playing defense, guarding Rudy Davalos. Jowers said, “Mac, let’s go full court.”

He said to get a quick drink or at least that is what I thought I heard. Just as I leaned over to get a drink, I felt a tremendous kick in the butt. I turned around and guess who arrived at the fountain at about the same time to deliver the kick? Yes, it was Jowers and he was red-faced. He said, “Boy do you want to play basketball?”

Needless to say, I beat him back to the court and without a drink of water. In reflection, he could have ignored the situation and put the jersey on someone else. However, it was his way to motivate players to bust himself. I never had a doubt about what was most important—it was to win no matter what the situation was.

*Submitted by Joddie Witte*

## Getting a Jowers Recommendation

Prior to graduation I received a call from Lyford High School about a head basketball coaching vacancy. The athletic director was from SWT and Jowers had given him my name. Never will I forget the interview and visit.

The superintendent took me to a house that they were going to provide as part of the salary and benefits. The current science teacher was still living in the house. It was about 10:30 a.m. when we got to the house and the superintendent knocked on the door. The science teacher woke up and let us in. The house was a disaster. The floors were covered with newspapers throughout the house. The superintendent then took me to the science lab. It was also a disaster. The chemicals were spilled over the floor, chemical bottles were broken everywhere.

The superintendent said that he would provide me with a credit card and expenses to return as often as needed to get the facilities back where they needed to be. He also said that one of the largest events in the year was a science fair sponsored by the school.

Following my visit with the superintendent, I visited the athletic director where he offered me the coaching job. I told him that I needed to discuss the offer with my wife. The teaching assignment was three biology classes, a chemistry class and a physics class. My second teaching field was science. In the meantime, while driving back to San Marcos after the interview, I discussed the offer with my wife. I told her that Lyford should hire a fully-certified science teacher. I called the athletic director and he said that the teaching assignment the superintendent offered me would not happen. He said the superintendent was leaving on a trip to Europe the next day and he needed to be able to tell the board that he had filled the science vacancy. He said that the superintendent would hire a fully-certified teacher prior to school starting.

In the meantime, I received a call from Superintendent Ben Rosenblad at Hutto High School, inviting me for an interview for the vacant athletic director's job and head coach in all sports. In fact, the only coach in the system — grades 7-12. Hutto had great tradition

and some good athletes. The teaching assignment included Physics, Math, American History and two science classes, plus a morning bus route. The salary was less than Lyford ISD and house rent was \$25.00 a month. After reflecting on the two offers, I accepted the job at Hutto.

The next day, Jowers called me into his office and said that when he recommends someone for a job, he did not expect it to be turned down. I explained to him why I accepted the offer at Hutto. It was obvious that he was upset. My decision turned out to be a good one. We played for the state championship in boys' basketball in my second year at Hutto.

The point to be made, in this, my first experience in the hiring process, was that Jowers had a tremendous reputation statewide for producing outstanding coaches and teachers. Mr. Rosenblad told me during the interview at Hutto that he would offer me the job because of Jowers' recommendation. This same situation was also true at Lyford. I can remember for several years, when one would check the programs for the state basketball tournament, the largest number of coaches listed with tournament teams had graduated from SWT as opposed to other colleges and universities.

He was a legend in Texas public schools for producing excellent coaches. There will never be another person who will be able to achieve the reputation he had with Texas superintendents.

*Submitted by Joddie Witte*

## **SWT and Sam Houston State**

I must comment on Garvis Hadley's recollection about Sam Houston always beating Southwest Texas State. He may regretfully remember the game at Huntsville in 1958. It was the last conference game of the year. We were averaging 92 points per game and Sam Houston had a great ball club. The starters for Southwest Texas in this game were Rudy Davalos, an All-American guard; Boonie Wilkening, left-handed jump shooter and all-conference guard; Don "Turkey" Forester, leading rebounder in the conference; Charlie Sharp,

All-American post who had one of the most unbelievable hook shots in the nation; and me. Sam Houston led most of the game. In the fourth quarter, Coach Jowers turned us loose with a full-court press. In a very low scoring game (I do not remember the exact final score but each team had under 50 points), I was the leading scorer with 20 points. I hope that Garvis will make a comment if he remembers this game. I remember Tom Goodman being at the game — he was playing baseball for Sam Houston State.

*Submitted by Joddie Witte*

## Three Great Coaches

Let me share a story or two about the three great coaches that I was fortunate to play for. Number one is George Carlisle who was and is known to all.

Coach number two was Johnny Frankie at Wharton Junior College who was a legendary coach there. I had received a scholarship to play basketball at Wharton Junior when I graduated from Webster High School. I remember Coach Carlisle telling me I needed to be prepared to sweat blood. He was correct. I recall one time when we played a bad ball game at Wharton. At the end of the game, Coach Frankie threw one of the sideline chairs across the gym floor, causing several people to jump as the chair went all the way to the other side of the gym floor. He worked us out after that game until about 12:30 a.m. (that's right — until after midnight!). All of us sweated some blood after that workout.

I also remember one time during a half-time review in the dressing room; Coach Frankie was so upset that he hit the portable chalkboard with his fist, knocking a hole through the chalkboard.

Coach number three was Milton Jowers at Southwest Texas. He was an outstanding coach and motivator. His teams were always fundamentally sound and as drilled as the Follies were. There are many stories about Coach Jowers and I would like to share a couple.

Stephen F. Austin defeated SWT in a game played at Nacogdoches. Throughout the game, a group of SFA students would hit a wood



railing with large sticks. Coach Jowers approached the SFA coach at half time to ask him to stop this display. The SFA coach said he had no control over the student body. So the hammering of the sticks continued in the second half. Well, guess what! SFA still had to come to San Marcos in the second half of the conference schedule.

Coach Jowers went to Dr. Tampke, Chair of the Music Department and a big supporter of Bobcat athletics, and asked him what type of instrument sound would have an impact on a person's concentration. Without hesitation, Dr. Tampke said that the cymbals would be this type of instrument. Well, the SFA team arrived in San Marcos for the big conference game. The game started and every time an SFA player prepared to shoot the cymbals would sound off at the end of the gym where SFA was shooting. The SFA coach approached Coach Jowers at half time to request that the students stop using the cymbals. Coach Jowers told him he had some control over the student body and that he would speak to them. He did speak to them and, in the second half, the students were moved to the other end of the gym, the end where SFA would be shooting this half, and the cymbals would again sound off when shots were about to be attempted. SWT won this game and many lessons were learned by all.

*Submitted by Joddie Witte*

## **The Follies**

*(All the players on the bench worked a lot on routines that involved leg crossing once or twice, pointing, standing up, sitting down and other routines in unison during the game. They would always do the Follies when the outcome of the game was already decided and in our favor).*

Jack Worthington was the unelected "captain" of the Follies team and his imagination was the source of the routines. Joddie was involved too, of course, but Joddie (as great as he was/and is) didn't have Jack's imagination when it came to the Follies. The connection to Jowers? He loved it, although he would never let it show publicly. That's my take!

*Submitted by Evelyn Worthington*

What a great group of guys this was. Although I do not recall exactly who the architect responsible for the start of this group was, I do remember that Jack Worthington, former coach and principal in the Spring ISD, and I were probably the originators of the group that became known as the Follies.

We developed all kinds of routines to be performed from the bench during time outs. One of the routines which the fans and students seemed to enjoy was when the last person on the end of the bench, away from the sideline huddle between Coach Jowers and the team, would stand up, lean to his left, and, with his left hand up to his left ear, would simulate listening to what was going on in the huddle. This was then followed in sequential order until the last player next to the sideline huddle would stand up in this listening mode. At this time, the fans would go wild as if we had just scored the winning bucket at the end of the game. On several occasions, I was that last person to stand up in the Follies routine.

Another point about Jack and the Follies. He had to be very careful about when to call the "Follies Team" into action. It had to be at a point when he (Jack) thought we had a victory. It has reminded me of the Red Auerbach cigar-lighting act with the Boston Celtics. He could only light up when he knew the victory was in hand. So it was with Jack Worthington and the Follies. Jack also knew the right time.

*Submitted by Donny Schmeltkopf*

The fans would always come early to the games in order to sit in the stands directly across the floor from the Bobcat bench so that they could watch the Follies in action. When the fans opposite our bench would start laughing or cheering for no reason, Coach Jowers would never look down the bench to see what they were cheering about over on the other side, he would just say, "Mac, what in the hell are they doing down there now?"

Coach Jowers never acted as if or ever acknowledged that the Follies existed. To be honest, I think he thoroughly enjoyed the time-outs. The fans were enthusiastically involved and it was a spark for the

team. To my knowledge, there never has been another Follies group in college basketball except at Southwest Texas State University.

*Submitted by Joddie Witte*

## **Coach Jowers Believed In Long and Hard Workouts**

Back in 1951, the Bobcats were starting to work out after the Christmas Holiday break when Coach Jowers informed the team they were going to Austin to scrimmage the Texas Longhorns. We arrived at old Gregory Gymnasium on the campus of the University of Texas about 8:30 in the morning. We started working out against the Texas team about 9:30 and scrimmaged half-court and full-court until 12:30 p.m.

After the scrimmage, the UT team showered and then left for their dorm rooms. The Bobcats went back to the gym floor and Coach had some tumbling mats placed around the floor. After a short meal of hamburgers and drinks, we lay on these mats and rested until about 2:30 p.m. The UT players were told to come back to the gym for a second scrimmage session. They couldn't believe they had to practice a second time.

Both teams scrimmaged for another two hours before finally quitting. Coach Jowers believed that his players should work very hard in practice so that the game itself would be a piece of cake. After going through two scrimmages with the Bobcats in one day, it looks like he made a believer out of UT players too!

## **Keep Running Until I Say Stop**

Way back when, and I think it was in 1961; we were having a sorry workout one day. One of our players, Chuck Trcka, was having the worst day of all. The longer practice went on, the worse it got and the madder Coach Jowers got. Finally he called practice off and yelled at Chuck to come over to him. Chuck did and Coach said, "Start running and keep running until I tell you to stop." Chuck did as he was told, started running.

Coach Jowers went into the dressing room, still mad, undressed and took a shower and never one time thought of Chuck and his running. Coach Jowers went home. About the time that he reached home, it dawned on him that he had forgotten about Chuck running. He turned his old truck around and drove back to the gym to see what Chuck was doing. He walked into the gym and there was Chuck still running, but very slowly. Coach didn't mention that he'd forgotten Chuck was running and went home, he just yelled, "Chuck, I guess that's enough running for the day."

I don't believe Chuck ever knew that Coach had forgotten him.

## **Get Back on Defense!**

In 1957 Boonie Wilkening was practicing shooting the ball and getting back on defense. Boonie always played on the baseline when we were on defense playing our 1-3-1 zone. One day in practice, Boonie told Coach Jowers that if he shot the ball then he could not get back on defense quick enough. Coach told him that he could and Boonie said, "No way."

That was not the right thing to say to Coach Jowers because Coach told Boonie to just shoot the ball with no one else on the court and then start running back on defense. Coach told him that he, Coach Jowers, would get the rebound or the ball if it went in and he would throw the ball all the way to the other end as soon as he got it. He also told Boonie that he better not get the ball to the opposite end of the court before Boonie got there. Boonie shot the ball and Coach caught it and threw it to the other end of the court time after time. Boonie did get back most of the time and if he hadn't, he still might be running down the court. Finally, and out of breath, Boonie decided that he could get back on defense when he shot the ball.

## Tough as Nails but Fair

To fully understand my relationship with Coach Jowers, a little history would be in order. I was raised in a house where nobody raised their voice, even when they were upset. The only cuss words I ever heard in my house were the occasionally “damn it” and on rare occasions an off-colored joke which today would not even be considered as such. When I was 12 years old, I was a pretty good catcher in midget softball sponsored by my church. I can remember one night after a game, my father pulled me aside and criticized me for giving the plate umpire dirty looks when I didn’t agree with his call. It broke my heart. I have never forgotten it. I can remember my mother saying to me, many times, “Son, don’t be so sensitive.” I was a person who got his feelings hurt very easily. I avoided criticism like the plague.

I first met Milton Jowers when he came to Brackenridge High School on a recruiting trip after Butch Craig and I graduated at mid term our senior year. Butch and I both visited SWT in the spring during spring basketball practice. I can remember being asked to play the top post during a scrimmage. In those days, I weighed 173 pounds. I could jump higher then than I ever did after I gained twenty pounds. So, I naturally put on a dunking exhibition while warming up. I stood flat footed and dunked over my head as well as a few other semi-inspirational dunks. This took place in the old gym, which became the women’s gym after the new gym was built. The thing I remember most about that trip was how nice the floor in the old gym was to jump on. There are three gym floors I remember well; that old SWT gym, Alamo Stadium gym, and the gym floor at Brackenridge High School. They were all very springy and easy on the legs. Somewhere along the way, they started building gym floors on concrete slabs.

Butch and I were both offered full scholarships. Unfortunately, Butch and I went to Del Mar College. I played football and basketball and Butch played basketball. The only thing worse than a four-hour scrimmage from 8 a.m. to 12 noon on January 1st under Coach Jowers was football practice in the humid air of Corpus Christi at 5:30 a.m. in August. It didn’t take me long to decide that my future was in basketball. I finished the football season but was happy to hit the

hardwoods at the end of the year. After a so-so season of basketball at Del Mar College, I decided to transfer after one year rather than play another year and have only two years at a four-year school.

After school was out, I called Coach Jowers and went back to see him and the new gym in San Marcos. We talked for a while and during the conversation he indicated he would like for me to go back to Del Mar and play football. When I indicated that I didn't want to play football again, he said, "Howard, I wanted you god-damned bad but the best I can do for you is a half-scholarship." After thinking for a few minutes, I walked to the window of his office, took a deep breath of hill country air and said, "I will take it and the reason I will is that you are the only coach who has been completely honest with me."

When I was being recruited by SWT in high school I can remember a SWT alumnus telling me that Coach Jowers was "tough as nails but fair."

I went back to San Antonio where I was working for a building materials supplier and insulation contractor. After a few weeks I got up one morning and while brushing my teeth, I seemed to feel that my teeth were loose in my jaw. I had a lump on the side of my face for several years. Whenever someone would ask me about it, I would always react with a macho brush-off as if nothing were wrong. It just so happened that my mother was going to the doctor on that particular morning, so I decided to go with her. When she came out of the doctor's office, I went in. The doctor put on a rubber glove, rubbed his finger down the jaw on the inside of my mouth and said, "Hum, it looks like we'll have to get that out of there. Within an hour I had been x-rayed and was sitting in a viewing room with a half dozen doctors looking at my x-rays hanging on lighted cases and speculating on what the kidney-shaped tumor in my jaw was.

I went home that day with a handful of medical books with the pages on mandibular tumors and oral surgery marked. I phoned Coach Jowers and told him what they had found and made an appointment to go to San Marcos to see him. I went to San Marcos and the first thing Coach Jowers said to me was that he wasn't concerned because he had planned to red-shirt me that year anyhow.

He also had done his homework on tumors of the jaw. It was he who informed me that it was good that the tumor was in the lower jaw because there was less likelihood of a malignancy. None of the doctors mentioned this to me.

So, in the fall of 1956, I transferred from Del Mar College to Southwest Texas and started working out with the team when fall practices started. I can remember one day Vernon McDonald coming up to me and telling me that they had made a decision that I would be moved from a post position to a guard or outside position on the tandem post. This is the kind of news every "center" wants to hear during his basketball career. I was one of the tallest players in my high school basketball district. I was, of course, excited about the prospects of playing a guard position in college.

I left school on October 12th and returned to San Antonio where I underwent surgery on October 15th. The surgery lasted four and one-half hours with two surgeons using a combination of hammer, chisel, electric drill and electric saw to remove the tumor and most of the jaw bone and replaced it with a piece of bone to match which was cut and removed from my hip. I lay on my back for three days. After taking shots for swelling and pain for three days, I started refusing pain killers on Thursday morning after the Monday surgery, and subsequently, went 96 hours without sleep. I went home on the following Monday, one week after the surgery. One might ask at this point what all of this has to do with "Jowers stories." My answer would be, "I'm just putting it all in perspective."

When I got home, I stepped on a scale and weighed 168 pounds. My hip made it difficult to walk. My jaws were wired together. I couldn't eat anything but liquids and life was pretty miserable. On October 29th, two weeks to the day after the surgery, I returned to school and the first thing I did was go to the gym, lean against the wall and slowly slump to the floor. I was using a cane to walk but it was great to be back in school.

The thing that I remember the most about the next couple of weeks was climbing to a class in the top of Old Main and falling asleep and having the bell wake me up. Gradually, I began to regain

my strength and within a few weeks I was able to resume some light workouts on the basketball floor. The wires on my teeth were to remain there for six weeks. I took them off about a week early while on a dinner date.

Sometime around the first of December, Coach Jowers approached me at practice about the possibility of playing that year. I informed him that my doctor had given me orders not to have any physical contact for a period of six months. I said to Coach Jowers that I would be willing to play and wear a mask, but he was against the idea so I became the gunner for the other team when simulating the upcoming opposition.

So, my first year at SWT, I was an artificial basketball player. Every week, I was someone else. It was a fun time for me. All I did was operate around the perimeter and fire the ball from long range. Playing without any pressure I shot very well. I never rebounded because it might involve physical contact, which could be harmful. I watched a lot of practice and felt a little sorry for Bill Krueger because Coach Jowers yelled at him so unmercifully. He never shouted at me that way! It was during this time that I am sure I developed a false sense of security.

The season ended, and after a brief layoff, the attention turned to the young players and under Coach McDonalds' leadership, the new players began to work on the mechanics of the tandem post. During this time I started getting anxious and began to voice my wish to scrimmage. It would be my first as an eligible candidate for the Bobcat team.

I am sure that if you were Vern McDonald or Milton Jowers you might say that I kept harping on the subject of when were we going to scrimmage? Vernon conducted most of the practices until one day, Coach Jowers came into the gymnasium about 3 o'clock. He looked at me and said, "Okay Lockhart, you want to scrimmage, then we will scrimmage." I was elated.

The ball went up at 3 o'clock. A good time later, I remember standing at the free throw line looking at the clock trying my best not to pass out. I was thinking, "Boy, I wonder how long this is going to



last? Doesn't anyone ever get a rest during scrimmage?" Two hours and fifty minutes later, the scrimmage ended. During those two hours and fifty minutes, I learned that it is better to keep your mouth shut around Coach Jowers. I also learned that, yes, Milton Jowers is very fair. He yelled at me exactly the same way he yelled at Bill Krueger. It was probably the first time in my life that I had ever had anyone yell at me. I also realized that it is a hell of a long way from four and one-half hours of major surgery and with 168 pounds to a three-hour scrimmage in a hot Texas gymnasium.

*Submitted by Howard Lockhart*

## **If You Can Score 18...**

I returned in the fall of 1957 very excited about the prospects of playing after a year off. One should remember that in the fall of 1957, Charlie was returning after a year away to recover from an accident. Boonie Wilkening had ankle surgery the previous year. Rudy Davalos was fresh off the campus of Wharton Jr. College and had yet to prove to be the best point guard in the NAIA.

Having spent the previous year working out with the team, much of the offense was geared toward me for the start of the season. Our first game was against Brooke Army Medical Center. We had one option where the point would pass and go opposite and the low post would come across to the side of the ball. The wingman would feed the low post and then cut for the basket off of a screen by the top post. Having never seen this play, we were able to burn BAMC with this play several times. As a result, I scored 18 points in the first six minutes of the game.

The next day, using the classroom for a meeting to discuss the game, Coach Jowers pointed out the fact that I had scored 18 points in the first quarter during which I played only six minutes. He continued on with his math and made it very clear to me, as he was always capable of doing, that, "Hell Lockhart, if you can score 18 points in one quarter then why the hell can't you play like that the whole game? If you had done that, then you should have scored 64 points?"

Needless to say, I left the meeting somewhat confused. I would have to say that the meeting produced a defining moment in my relationship with Milton Jowers. I still don't know if he was serious or not.

*Submitted by Howard Lockhart*

## **Love and Divorce**

When you, Vernon McDonald, and Jowers decided to give me a try at the high post position, Jowers watched me for awhile, then came over, took the ball from me, got in my face and said, "Son! You play the high post about like I make love! You're gonna have to really rev it up or we're going to have to divorce you!"

I know now he was kidding to make a point... I think... and he certainly made one with me.

*Submitted by Frank Miller*

## **Christmas Trip 1964**

In the spring of 1963 Coach Jowers called me into his office and said that he had been having correspondence with a group in California called People-to-People. They organized and tried to get funding for different basketball teams to travel around the country and world and play basketball. Since Lyndon Johnson was our President they wanted to help us get a basketball trip together and travel up the East Coast and play basketball games and include playing in Washington, D.C. Coach said to make some of the cost or we couldn't go. I start-ing contacting this group and we got a trip together starting the next December of 1964 and lasting through the New Year.

We left San Antonio and flew to Atlanta, Georgia to play Oglethorpe University. Our plane was late in arriving in Atlanta and we finally got to our hotel one hour before our game was to start. I gave each player a candy bar and we headed out to play our first game on the trip. We were awful and lost the game by some 15 or so points. We got up the next morning and got on an early bus and

drove across Georgia to Statesboro to play Georgia Southern. We lost the game on the last shot by two points and Georgia Southern went on to the National Tournament and lost in the championship game. We played very good basketball on this night.

The next morning we got up and caught another bus back across Georgia to Atlanta and then caught a plane to Washington, D.C. We spent the night there and then went to a nearby military base to play a school named Northeastern. We had the middle 35 seats reserved for President Johnson and his entourage and he never showed up. We won the game and went back to our hotel to find a note from the White House telling us to meet the President the next morning at 10 o'clock.

We arrived at the White House the next morning about 9:45 a.m. to see the President. They took our entire team into the cabinet room. This is where the President had his meetings with all his secretaries. Our players got out their cameras and started taking pictures and the security men came over and told us that no one other than the White House photographers took pictures in there and that we should put our cameras under our chairs on the floor. The President was late in getting there but he finally came in with a big old grin and said "Hello Bobcats." He explained that he could not attend the game the night before because he had a dinner with a little German named Adenaur, the prime minister. He wanted to know why our cameras were under our chairs and I told him that security said that we could not take pictures in that room. He told my team to get their cameras and take all the pictures that they wanted and they did. It was really a fun visit for us.

The next day we flew to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada and played another game and won again. Then we caught a train and rode to a place named Waterloo-Kitchener with a population of about 1,000,000. We won again and the next morning we again rode a train to Windsor to play the University of Windsor. This was the highest scoring game that any team of ours has ever played. We won the game 112 to 103. This Canadian school won the National Championship of Canada later that year. Then we flew back to the U.S. and into Syracuse, New York to play in a tournament.

We won one and lost one in that tournament. Now we had won five games and lost three. We then took a bus to New York City and flew back to San Antonio. I met with Coach Jowers the next day to tell him about the trip and to explain our expenditures during the trip. We had been gone 14 days, had missed home for Christmas and New Year's, and had spent \$410 over our guarantees. What a trip for 12 people and for that amount of money. Even Coach Jowers was satisfied.

**In 1964, during the Christmas trip,  
Coach Jowers arranged for the team to visit SWT alum  
Lyndon B. Johnson in the White House.**



*Back row: David Pratka, Ronny Arrow, Henry Garcia, Chet Cook, Morris Ogden, Phillip Dugger, Glen Crisp, and Gary Mullens. Front row Bill Overall, Dwayne Lenox, President Lyndon Johnson, Vernon McDonald, Lynn McDonald, Donny McDonald, Dolores McDonald, and Larry Black.*

## **In Orbit**

Donnie Schmeltekopf was guarding me in a scrimmage and fouling the hell out of me and not getting caught, so I forearmed him in the chest and he squealed like a pig. Jowers got mad and told me to get my ass in orbit and count the laps every time I passed him. The more I ran the madder I got. On lap 50 I screamed out the number loud as hell and Jowers spun around and told me to get my butt back into the game.

We practiced three hours one morning and then went to Austin and scrimmaged UT. We didn't play well, so when we got back to San Marcos tired, sore, and ready to get some sleep, Coach Jowers told us to suit out and we practiced again that night.

*Submitted by Rudy Davalos*

## **Theoretically**

One day in practice, Frank Miller was playing the outside guard position and was continuously late getting to the top of the circle for the double screen. Jowers said, "Miller, you gotta' get there exactly when Henson does." Miller responded (no one ever said he was smart): "But Coach, it's theoretically impossible to get there EXACTLY when Henson does." Jowers, as he turned red: "Theoretically my ass, just do it!"

*Submitted by Bob Henson*

## **Toughest Man I Know**

Coach Phil George served as the basketball coach and athletic director at San Angelo College before he retired. He told me that five of his former players and he went deer hunting a few days ago (winter of 2008) and they were discussing tough men that they knew. The question got around to Coach George and he said he thought Milton Jowers was the toughest coach that he had ever known. They asked him why he thought that.

Coach George said that when he was a senior at the University of Texas, their basketball team scrimmaged the SWT Bobcats during the Christmas holidays. He thought the Bobcat basketball team was vicious and that Coach Jowers never let up on his players or the scrimmage. He said that he remembered that the scrimmage was a war and he was convinced that Coach Jowers was really a very tough man and coach.

Later when he started to coach in the Lone Star Conference and got to know Coach Jowers, he said that he was so pleased that out of coaching he was a very easy-going person and that he really liked and appreciated him. He thought that Coach Jowers always had his way with a person or with a group. He really liked him after he got to know him.

*Submitted by Coach Phil George*

## **What Made Jowers so Successful?**

They have a plaque in Strahan Coliseum at Texas State University. It has all of Coach Jowers number of wins from his years in high school and in college. The records are in basketball and football. When he was the basketball coach at Shiner, his teams won 102, lost seven. One year when he was at San Marcos High School they won the state basketball championship when there was just one classification, they beat Austin, El Paso, and Abilene in the state tournament. They say, "Coach Jowers was always the best."

He was a really great coach. He was the meanest guy in the world. I liked him, and he treated everybody the same, but he knew how to coach you. When he coached me, if he chewed me out, I took it personally. I thought he hated my mother, my daddy, I'd hang my head, and I was through. He would not chew me out while we were playing. He'd just take me out. Spider, he'd chew him out and he'd say, "Your game, get a rebound" and Spider said, "That SOB, I'll get it" and he'd just get everything in sight. He knew he could really chew him out... he was really a coach.

## Nashville Referee

In 1959 we got beat by Tennessee State. One of the officials in that game was from Nashville, Tennessee, where Tennessee A&I is located. This guy called a miserable, terrible, awful game. Coach Jowers screamed and yelled and hollered and they gave him a technical. We got beat by one point. One point. We lost our chance to win the whole thing.

The next year we were back up there and the same referees were in there. We were sitting up in the stands, scouting, Coach Jowers and I were. This same referee was calling the game. He grabbed his chest, fell to the floor and died right there on the floor. And Coach Jowers said, "He deserved it!"

I said "Coach!"

Jowers said again, "He did deserve it."

He didn't hold a grudge, did he? That was a mean son of a gun.

## Coach Jowers the High School Lecturer

In 1957, the High School Basketball Association asked Coach Jowers to be the guest speaker at Coaching School. Every time that Coach lectured, there was a full house, which was unbelievable. Many times at these clinics, the coaches would go play golf or just visit during the lectures. He was so popular that the Coaching Association asked him if he would lecture again the next year in 1958. This clinic usually invited big-name coaches from all over the United States to give lectures and clinics, but here they were asking for Coach Jowers to come in back-to-back years.

Coach Jowers did return that second year and informed the high school coaches he was not available anymore after this year. The reason—by lecturing at the clinic on so many of the aspects of the tandem post offense that he created, he was giving all of his South-west Texas secrets to other Lone Star coaches. It was making his job so much more difficult; he just couldn't do it anymore.

## Crooked Officials

In the season of 1950–51 we won the conference and had to play Texas Tech in Lubbock. When the officials were designated for the game and when Coach Jowers found out who they were, he was just sick. These same two officials had called our game with East Texas during the season and all four of our inside players had fouled out and we lost the game.

Next we played North Texas and these same two officials called the game and three of our inside players fouled out and the fourth one had four fouls and we lost again. Now we were playing for a chance to go to the National Tournament in Kansas City for the first time and we had these same two officials again. At the half all four of our inside players had four fouls and our chance of winning was nil. At the half time break Coach told us to go to the dressing room, then he went into the officials dressing room, which was next door to our room.

You could hear him screaming and yelling and calling the officials everything other than good officials. The last thing that he said to them was that he knew that they were not going to let us win but when the game was over, he was going to call the head of the Texas Officials Association and do everything possible to get them fired and that he was going to get it done if it was the last thing that he ever did.

He walked back into our dressing room and said, "Let's go." That was his entire speech to us. We found out soon that his half time visit with the officials worked and started working immediately. We had not played but a minute or so and "Spider" almost knocked down the man that he was guarding and nothing was called. The game got really vicious soon afterward and not one of our players ever fouled out. We thought that the half time speech that Coach Jowers used on the officials was the best half time talk of his career. After the game we dressed and were walking out of the gym and ran right into the two officials that were also leaving. They asked Coach Jowers how he liked the second half. He told them that he had thought that they were crooks and now he had proof. He walked right by them and never gave them a glance.



## **Yes, But Not Now...**

Back in the late 50s or early 60s, the Bobcats were in Kansas City playing in the National Basketball Tournament. During one game in which Coach Jowers thought the officials were cheating us, he got to yelling pretty loud at just about everything. Finally, one of the officials called a technical foul on Coach and after the shot was taken, the official walked over to our bench and leaned over real close to Coach. The official asked him "Do you want to say anything else?" Coach looked him right in the eye and said "Yes, but not as long as you have that whistle in your mouth." I thought the official was going to choke. What could he do?

## **Film Exchange**

We went to Stephen F. Austin, they had a good coach named John O. Stevens and they had a good team. After playing Stephen F. Austin, Coach Jowers found out that Stephen F. had sent the game tape to a team in Louisiana that we were going to play. Coach Jowers was hot! You're not supposed to do things like that but it is legal now and everyone does it now, but at the time, Coach Jowers was mad.

We went to Stephen F. Austin, we worked out the day before we were going in and got back home the next morning about 6:30 or 7:00 a.m. I was asleep. Coach Jowers was getting up, he said, "Mac, y'all get up."

I said, "What?"

He says "GET UP! Get up! I want you to go with me."

"Where are we going?"

"I'm gonna go whip John O. Stevens."

"What? What are you talking about?"

"He's lying. He swapped film with a guy in Louisiana and now he says he didn't do it and I'm gonna go whip him."

"Coach you better think about it."

"I already thought about it. Put your clothes on I want you to watch it, I want you to know I'm doing things right."

I said, "Well I guess so." So I put my clothes on and we got in the

car. My heart was beating about 100 miles an hour and we went up to Stephen F. Austin, walked into the gym and there's John O. Stevens sitting behind his desk.

John O: "Hello, Milton."

Coach Jowers: "Don't speak to me I'm fixing to whip your 'a' double 's' ".

John O: "Coach,"

Coach: "Get up, I'm gonna whip you right now."

John O: "You may whip me, but I'm not going to get up."

Coach Jowers: "Get up, get up!"

John O: "I ain't getting up."

Coach Jowers: "One more time, get up."

John O: "I'm not getting up."

Coach: "Well you wait 'till tonight."

When we left, Coach was just trembling. He wanted to whip that guy so bad. Stevens knew he was gonna get whipped. That night, we played them and they beat us at least 20 points. Game was over with and Coach Jowers walks off and says, "I knew I shoulda whipped his ass."

*As told by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## **Bear Who?**

In Kansas City one time, Coach Jowers and the team were having a meeting one afternoon in Coach's room. The phone rang and I picked up the phone and some man said that he wanted to speak to Milton Jowers. I told him that we were in a team meeting. The man insisted that he speak to Coach Jowers immediately. I told Coach and he came across the room, picked up the phone and said, "Hello, hello... yeah, yeah, yeah... yeah we're playing tonight... yeah... who?... who is this? Bear who? Oh hello, Coach Bryant, I didn't know who I was talking to. Well hell no... no... no... yeah... no... no... no, no, no. Goodbye."

He gets off the phone and somebody says, "Who was that?" Jowers answers, "Bear Bryant, he was going to send his plane up

here to get me, the board of regents wanted to talk to me and they'd fly me down there and get me back in time for our game. I told them no, I wasn't interested."

Coach didn't even know who he was talking to. Bear who??? He could not figure out for a while who he had been talking to.

## **Logging the Miles**

In 1952 the Bobcats played a basketball game in Alpine with Sul Ross, a game that we won. After the game the entire team drove back to San Marcos. We got home about 5:00 a.m. We had a noon workout and then Coach Jowers and one of our football players, Dale Johanson, got into Coach Jowers' personal car and the two of them drove to Commerce, Texas to scout East Texas. It was about 275 miles to Commerce and after driving back after the Sul Ross game, Coach figured that he would have to have help when he drove back after the East Texas game. That is why he got Dale to ride with him because he let Dale drive back home. It was over 400 miles to Alpine and over 400 miles back and then it was 275 miles to Commerce and 275 miles back and he did all that in two days. Then after three days, the team drove to Commerce and played East Texas in a basketball game that we won. Coach had driven about 1100 miles in that short period of time.

## **Gentlemen, Please Take Your Seat**

I came back in '57 and Coach Jowers was coaching the basketball team, he was the assistant at that time. One of the interesting stories I remember about those days: Coach Jowers sat at the old gym right in the corner and he looked up during the ball game and there were a couple of football players who had come in from the other end of the facility and he motioned for Leslie Fisher to go down and tell them to get in the stands. Well Jowers is watching this and Leslie goes around... and at that time, the stands were always full. Leslie Fisher was telling these two guys to get in the stands and they must have

said something back to him, cause Coach Jowers was watching and he turned red-faced and he started across the court with the game going on and then he realized what he'd done, so he went around and they saw him coming and they tried to find a hole in the place where they could get in and sit down. Jowers grabbed one of them by the collar and threw him up in the stands and he kicked the other one... put him up in there. Coach Jowers would get fired up pretty quick; it didn't take much to turn him red-faced.

*Submitted by Clovis Barker*

## **Coach Gets A Speeding Ticket**

Coach had driven over to Seguin to scout a basketball game. After he left the gym, I guess he was in a hurry because a Seguin city policeman pulled him over for speeding. Coach was convinced that he was not speeding and proceeded to tell the city policeman what he thought of him. The policeman gave him a ticket and told him that he could argue with the judge but that he had to come back to court.

Coach did go back to Seguin on the appointed day and time and told the judge his side of the story. The judge asked the policeman to tell what he had done to determine that Coach was speeding. The policeman said that he had followed Coach several blocks and clocked him at the excessive speed and that was why Coach was stopped and given a ticket.

Coach told the judge that the policeman was lying and he had not followed him but a very short distance. Of course the judge gave Coach a speeding ticket and informed him to watch his driving, especially in Seguin. Coach said that he would pay the fine and go back to San Marcos, but that the policeman had better not cross Coach Jowers path if he ever came to San Marcos. Coach turned and walked out.

## **Expensive Candy**

In 1960 the Bobcats played in a Christmas basketball tournament in Dallas. After the first game Coach Jowers invited me to go to the movie with him. The movie that he wanted to see was called "The Alamo." It was the premier showing in that area. Coach bought my ticket and when we went inside the theater he suggested that we both get some candy. He bought both our candies and they were in small boxes. After we sat down in our seats, we started eating our candy. I noticed Coach ate a few of his pieces of candy and then he tore the top of the box off that the candy was in and put the box top in his mouth and started chewing. I watched him for a moment and said, "What in the world are you doing eating that box top?" Coach said, "If I had known how much that candy would cost, I would've eaten yours too."

## **Like Winning a Consolation Game**

Back in 1972 I was voted Coach of the Year in the Lone Star Conference. The next day or two Coach Jowers and I were in the State Bank and Clovis Barker told me that winning the Coach of the Year award was about like winning a consolation game. Coach Jowers bristled up and asked Clovis if he had ever won banker of the year or any kind of award like that. It tickled me that he took up for me before I could say anything.

## **Sports and Science**

In fall of 1955, I had a scholarship to Texas A&M but that year they brought in a new basketball coach named Ken Loeffler. Early on, he let it be known that he was going to rewrite Southwest Conference basketball with players from the Northeast and Texas boys could either leave now or flunk out.

I called my father to come get me and we were headed for Kingsville and a scholarship at Texas A&I. For some reason that I don't recall, we stopped in San Marcos and talked to Coach Jowers.

He offered me a half-scholarship for the first semester and red-shirt for a year then go on a full scholarship. We were tired of driving, so I stayed. Incidentally, until recently, Loeffler had the worst record of any coach in A&M history.

## **Big Don's Story**

Earl and I shared a room in the old triplex as freshmen. It was a real dump! Other freshmen in that class were Charlie Sharp, Jack Worthington, "Spanky" Williams, Stewert Webb, Jerry Sanderlin, and Leroy Weidner, and a guy from New Jersey.

The "New Men's Gym" was finished for the '56-'57 season. Earl was to be team captain until he and Coach butted heads. Earl and I still roomed together until he and Lynne got married and left.

In 1957-58 Don Forester and I played the baseline position. I was a Chemistry major and Coach didn't like the afternoon labs that conflicted with practice. So I spent many nights alone on the fourth floor of the science building finishing up my lab requirements. Also (confirmed by Coach Mac) Jowers was not at all happy that my brother, Wayne (6 foot 11 plus inches) decided to go to the University of Texas instead of SWT. Coach Jowers blamed me for Wayne's decision.

Then after spring training, Coach found out that I was planning to get married and called me into his office. Jowers told me if I did that, he would cut my scholarship to a half. So I left the team. Those events led to him contacting and getting Earl back to SWT.

*Submitted by Dr. Don Clark*

## **Stay On Your Side of the Line!**

I remember another time with Buddy Meyers a St. Mary's basketball coach. Vernon was coaching and Jowers was athletic director. It was a heated game, going back and forth and Buddy Meyers was getting carried away, he was coming down on the other end of the court coaching and Coach Jowers got up tapped him on the shoulder and told him to sit down and he went back to his spot. A little bit

later in the game he got up again and went back and Coach Jowers picked him up from behind and carried him over and threw him in the chairs and said, "I said sit there." And he sat there the rest of the game. But he was something else.

*Submitted by Clovis Barker*

## **Lesson Taught**

About 10 or 15 years ago I, Dr. "Moe" Johnson, was in Livingston, Texas and ran across a fellow Bobcat alum—J.C. "Spider" Maze. To SWT basketball fans he was a legend and the best rebounder inch for inch that ever wore the uniform. As we were visiting, Spider commented, "If it had not been for Coach Jowers I would still be walking behind a mule and plow on a sand farm here in Livingston." Spider then told this story:

The Bobcats were playing Sul Ross in Alpine, Texas one night. The team stayed in a small local motel and after their pre-game meal the team walked around the town. When they arrived at the motel, a police car pulled up in front of Coach Jowers' room. Coach called everyone into his room and asked, "Who did it?" (Someone had taken a small item from one of the stores.) One player finally stood up and admitted to the deed. Coach told him to go with the officer, return the stolen item, and apologize to the people. "They will either lock you up or maybe let you go." Spider said they did let him go and they thought it was all over. Not so. After the game that night about 10 p.m., they went back to the motel "dog-tired" for a good night's rest. Not so. Coach Jowers told them to get their clothes—"We are going back to San Marcos." (400 miles, eight or nine hours.) Upon arrival back on campus it was about 7 a.m. and they were all ready to go to bed but Coach had other ideas. They were to be back on the basketball court in 30 minutes to work out. LESSON TAUGHT—no one ever stole anything again. Coach Jowers taught you lessons you never forgot—he changed boys into men.

*Submitted by Dr. "Moe" Johnson.*

## 1959-60 National Basketball Team 50th Anniversary

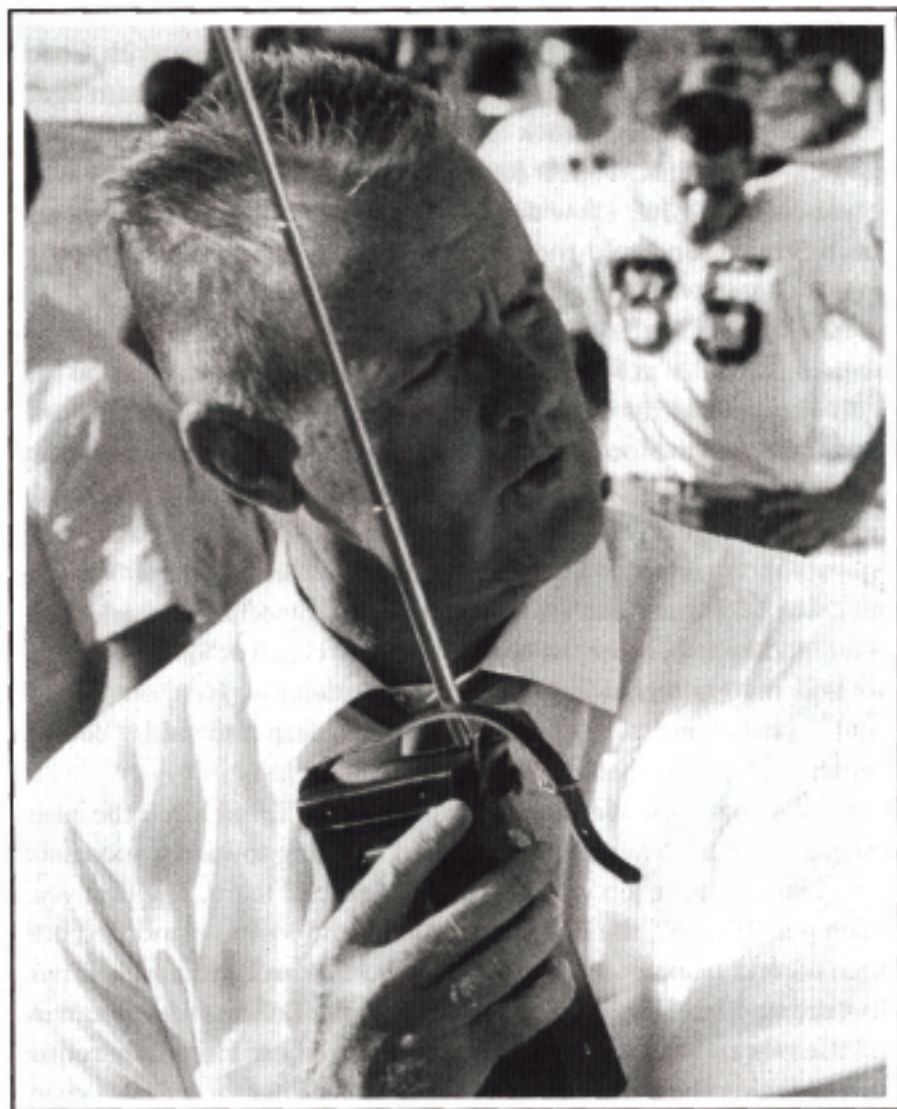


*Back row: Bruce Gregg, Harper Augsburg, Don Clark, Lloyd Little, Don Forester, Frank Miller, and Vernon McDonald. Front row: Joddie Witte, Howard Lockhart, Rudy Davalos, Boonie Wilkening, Donny Schmeltekopf, Bob Henson, and Bobby Patton.*



Chapter 3

**FOOTBALL ANECDOTES**



## Introduction to Football

The Bobcat football team won two games and lost eight during the school year of 1960-61. The Bobcat basketball team had again been very successful and had returned to the National Tournament in Kansas City this same year. After both seasons were over, the SWT President and Athletic Director and Coach Strahan met with Coach Jowers and asked him if he would take over the football team again and try to get it back on track to be a winner again. Coach told them that he would think about it for a few days and let them know what he had decided. After a few days he again met with the President and Coach Strahan and told them that he would take over the football program again with some other considerations.

He wanted Coach Al Reeh to stay on as the line coach. He wanted to hire Billy Miller as his offensive coordinator and he wanted to hire Keith Hoffman as his defensive coordinator. He went on to say that he would coach the football team for three years and three years only. Next he wanted to give the head basketball job to Vernon McDonald and he could hire any assistant that he wanted. They agreed to all his requests and that is how I became the head basketball coach. The way that I was told was Coach Jowers came into my office and asked me if I would like to become the head basketball coach at SWT. I told him that was my main goal in my coaching profession. He then reached into his pocket and pitched his keys on my desk and said, "You are now the head basketball coach at Southwest Texas."

Coach then took over the football job at SWT and hired the assistant coaches that he wanted and started working toward a successful three-year coaching job with the Bobcat football team. The first year, which was 1961-62, the Bobcats won four and lost five and tied one. In the second season of 1962-63, the Bobcats won eight and lost two. His third and last season to coach football, the Bobcats were ten wins and 0 losses and ranked number one in the nation. He totally retired from coaching then and took over as athletic director. What a coach and what a man.

## Two Sports and Athletic Director

As I look back on the 1960 championship year of the Bobcats' basketball team, another development in the coaching career of Milton Jowers was being put in place, his becoming the head football coach just two years later. The football coach at the time was R.W. Parker who had been the Bobcats' coach since the early 1950s. One of his assistant coaches in 1959-60 was none other than Vernon McDonald. I also played football at the time and I recall that Mac's main assignment was to scout the opposing teams, then to oversee the plays in practice of the upcoming opponent. I was a backup quarterback, so I often got to run the plays.

It was a lot of fun, but one day in practice when we ran a play of the upcoming opposing team, Parker insisted with Mac that there was no way the team would run that kind of play, or something along those lines. Needless to say, Mac didn't take kindly to being rebuffed in such a fashion. Well, the football team ended with a losing season and Mr. Parker did not return as coach. The next year proved even worse for SWT football. So who stepped in?

The athletic director, Milton Jowers named himself, and he named Coach Mac as the head basketball coach. Within two years, the Bobcats were winning the Lone Star Conference in football. Coach Jowers had that rare capacity, it seemed, to be able to coach any sport. That was because he was a master, like the great Vince Lombardi, at motivating his players to run through walls for him.

*Submitted by Dr. Donnie Schmeltekopf*

## Man of His Word

The first time I met Coach Jowers was the summer of 1953. I was working for a small oil company in Yancy, Texas. I was going to work a couple of months and then report to Rice Institute to play football on a scholarship. I knew that Coach Jowers was the football coach at Southwest Texas in San Marcos. I had seen him when our basketball team played in the Regional Tournament in San Marcos in 1951. I had also heard stories about Coach Jowers from my uncle who had attended SWT.

However, on this summer afternoon in July, 1952 I was busy covering up some oil that had spilled around one of the wells that we maintained and up drove Coach Jowers and Sam Norris, a sporting goods salesman representing C & S Sporting Goods, whom I later came to know and appreciate as a loyal Bobcat booster. Coach Jowers introduced the two. I don't remember an awful lot about that meeting. What I do remember is that Coach Jowers was not one to spend a lot of time on small talk. Also, he did not try to persuade me to change my mind about my commitment to Rice. What I do specifically remember is his closing remark as they were preparing to leave. He said, "John, if you ever change your mind and want to come to SWT just show up and you will have a scholarship to play football." I attended Rice in 1952-53 and played football, basketball, and baseball on the freshman teams. All were coached by Charlie Moore.

In 1953 the rules changed for football and a player had to play both offense and defense. I really wanted to play and did not think that I could play much at Rice (besides Houston was an awful huge place for this country boy) so I decided to see if Coach Jowers was a man of his word. So in mid-September 1953 after attending Rice football for two weeks I drove to San Marcos and watched the last part of a Monday football practice. It was obviously a very vigorous practice. All players (linemen, backs, ends, kickers) were in single lines having tackling practice. I found out later that the Bobcats had lost to Howard Payne that weekend.

After practice was over I worked my way over to Coach Jowers and re-introduced myself and timidly was preparing to ask Coach Jowers whether he still had a scholarship for me. Before I could get the question out of my mouth Coach Jowers said something like, "Yeah we have a scholarship. I will meet with you after awhile. Just meet me in my office."

I really got to play for Coach Jowers only one year. After that year he gave up coaching football and coached only basketball. I was third string fullback as a sophomore. You can't imagine how a small-town-all-everything settled into this third string fullback. As if that wasn't enough, after the 1953 season and in the spring of 1954 Coach

Jowers called me in and suggested that I move to the end position (actually told me if I wanted to play, it would be at the end position). I respected Coach Jowers and did not hesitate to change positions. It worked and I was very successful at this new position both offensively and defensively.

I will always appreciate Coach Jowers and everything that he did for me. Whenever I think of Coach Jowers, or whenever someone mentions him in a conversation, I am always reminded of a man of not so many words but A MAN OF HIS WORD. I don't have many regrets in life, but one is that so many people that I really appreciated I allowed time to pass and not go to them and tell them how much I appreciated what they did for me. Coach Jowers is on the top of that list.

*Submitted by John Faseler*

## **Mopping the Handball Courts**

For our scholarships each athlete had a job assigned to him on campus. My job was to clean the handball courts. I had never heard of a handball court, did not know what it was, and did not know where they were. After a few days Coach Jowers called me into his office and asked me why I was not doing my cleaning job. I told him that I knew nothing about a handball court or even where they were. Well, he showed me and told me that he always played in the middle court. I got an oiled mop and started mopping all the courts. Coach Jowers' first game was with Buzzy Allert. They started playing and coach slipped and slid and fell. He called me into his office again. He asked me how I had cleaned the handball floors and I told him with the oil mop. I was told that I never should use an oil mop but always use a mop with water on it. Coach never slipped again, I guarantee you.

*Submitted by Caddo Sanders*

## **I Owe Much of My Success to Coach Jowers**

Coach Jowers was a true man of his word. When I told him that I was going into the Army he told me that when I got back that I would have a scholarship. While I was in the service, Coach Jowers retired and the college hired another football coach, R.W. Parker. I returned to SWT after my discharge and Coach Parker told me that he was playing bigger players and that I would not get my scholarship back. I went to Coach Jowers and told him my problem and asked him what I should do. He said, "Caddo, what did I tell you when you left for the army?" I said that he had told me that I had my scholarship when I returned. He said for me not to worry that my scholarship would be honored and it was.

When Coach Jowers died it was just like losing my second daddy. We loved that man. I owe much of my success in life to Coach Jowers.

*Submitted by Caddo Sanders*

## **Buzzy Allert**

When Coach Jowers was the football coach at Southwest Texas, he recruited a big, rangy redheaded boy from Gonzales by the name of Buzzy Allert. He developed into an All-American and after graduation played a little professional football in Canada. Between Buzzy's junior and senior year and in the summer month of July, Buzzy decided to get into better shape than everyone else so he went over to Texas Lutheran College in Seguin and told the coach over there that he was unhappy at Southwest Texas and was thinking about transferring to Texas Lutheran.

Well, the TLC coach was ecstatic and asked Buzzy if he would like to join the TLC team that had already started working out. Buzzy said, "That's why I'm here." After a few days someone saw the workouts in Seguin and knew Buzzy. They came to San Marcos and told Coach Jowers that Buzzy was thinking of transferring.

Coach Jowers got into his pickup truck and drove over to Seguin. He was going to find out what was going on. As he drove up to the practice field, Buzzy was also on his way to practice. He saw the pickup truck and he knew who was driving it. Buzzy ran back to the dorm and grabbed what little stuff he had and took off. Later Buzzy said that he had left a pair of blue jeans and his toothbrush, but he didn't care because he was afraid of Coach Jowers. Later Buzzy came to San Marcos when our team started practicing and told Coach Jowers that he was just trying to get in better shape. Coach Jowers had to go tell the Texas Lutheran Coach the whole story.

## **Another Buzzy Allert Story**

We were playing a football game in San Marcos and on a certain fourth down the Bobcats had to punt. After a very long punt, the ball came down to the opposing player and as he caught the ball, Buzzy killed him. I ran down the sideline and yelled at Buzzy about the great tackle job. The official threw the red flag and called, "coaching from the sideline." Buzzy quickly asked the official what the penalty was for. The official asked Buzzy "Who's that man on the sidelines cheering for you?" Buzzy replied that he had never seen me before. The official then told him that I was one of his coaches. Needless to say, Coach Jowers invited me to stay or be near the bench from then on. Say that he invited me was putting it mildly.

## **Great Twosome**

Pence Dacus was the quarterback when Leo Chafin was the running back and they really made a great twosome. Pence played two years of junior college football at Tarleton College before he transferred to Southwest Texas. Pence was drafted by the Detroit Lions but before he had a chance to play professional football he entered the Air Force since he was in the R.O.T.C. at Southwest Texas. After Pence got his discharge from the Air Force he became a foreign missionary.

Pence might have been the best all-around athlete in the history of our school.

- He was All-Conference in football and was drafted by the Detroit Lions.
- He was captain of our basketball team.
- He and Les Talley won the conference tennis title.
- He lettered in track as a high jumper.
- His best sport might have been golf, but he didn't have enough time for it.

## **Lying in the Grass**

Years ago when Coach Jowers was still the football coach; we always practiced football on the practice field that is now where our tennis facilities are located. One long, long afternoon of practicing, Coach Jowers had the team running 100-yard wind sprints one after the other. On this team was a boy by the name of Jimmy Jircik. He was not a regular but he worked out every day and usually played defense on the practice team against the varsity offense. During all this running of wind sprints, Jimmy decided that he was too tired to run anymore so he started looking for some place where he could stop and not be noticed by Coach Jowers. Jimmy knew that after all practices, Coach always walked off the end of the practice field and walked up the hill to the dressing facilities. These dressing facilities were situated where our natatorium is now.

Well Jimmy decided that if he would fall off the practice field over on the side of the field where there was a lot of tall Johnson grass growing, Coach would never see him. And he could just get up after the running was finished and walk off with the rest of the team. Jimmy worked his way on running the sprints way over to one side so that he was near the edge and the tall Johnson grass.

Sure enough, the time came and he fell off to one side and into the grass. The rest of the team kept on running until complete exhaustion and Coach finally called practice off. As things worked out, Coach did not walk off the field at his normal place at the end of the practice



field, but this time he stepped off near the tall grass, and there was Jimmy lying there.

Coach asked Jimmy what he was doing, and Jimmy told him that he was just too tired and winded to run anymore. Coach told him that he did look like he was too tired and winded to run anymore so why didn't he just walk up to the dressing room area and turn in his uniform because he was not going to be on the team anymore.

## **Charlie Hall**

Charlie Hall was a great high school athlete from Karnes City, Texas. He was good in football, basketball and probably best in track. Coach Jowers talked him in to coming to Southwest Texas.

One day someone came by the gym and told Coach Jowers that the University of Texas had offered Charlie a full scholarship for only track and they thought he was going to take it. Coach Jowers got in his pickup truck and headed for Karnes City.

Since it was summertime, he found out that Charlie was working in a service station. He found Charlie and told him what he heard about Texas and their scholarship. Charlie said that they had offered him a scholarship and he didn't know what to do. Coach Jowers told him that he had given him his word that he would attend Southwest Texas. That was the end of it, he thought. He asked Charlie if his word was good. Charlie told him that his word was always good. Coach said, "Then I'm going back to San Marcos and forget that I ever came down here because you have told me that you were coming to Southwest Texas and stay." Charlie told him that was right.

When school started the next fall, sure enough, Charlie showed up for football practice the very first day. After practice, Coach Jowers told Charlie that he was glad that he had come and that since he had given his word, he better not leave. Charlie told Coach that he was here to stay. Charlie was red-shirted one year, so that meant that he could participate in some sport for the fifth year. Five years later he called Charlie in and said, "You can leave now. You can graduate." You just did whatever Coach told you to do.

## Glass Eye in the Sul Ross Game

In that game, I haven't told you this, but in that game we had a guy, Jim Haley, who played as a freshman at Texas as a guard and transferred to Southwest Texas. He had a good eye and a glass eye. One time in a game, he got knocked out, so they took him into the dressing room. We were all in there and the doctor came in. He flashed a light into that glass eye. He looks up and said, "No reaction." Coach Jowers says, "What did you say?" Doc looks again, "No reaction." Jowers looked up and says, "That's a glass eye, Doc, try the other."

True story — he thought that boy was dead.

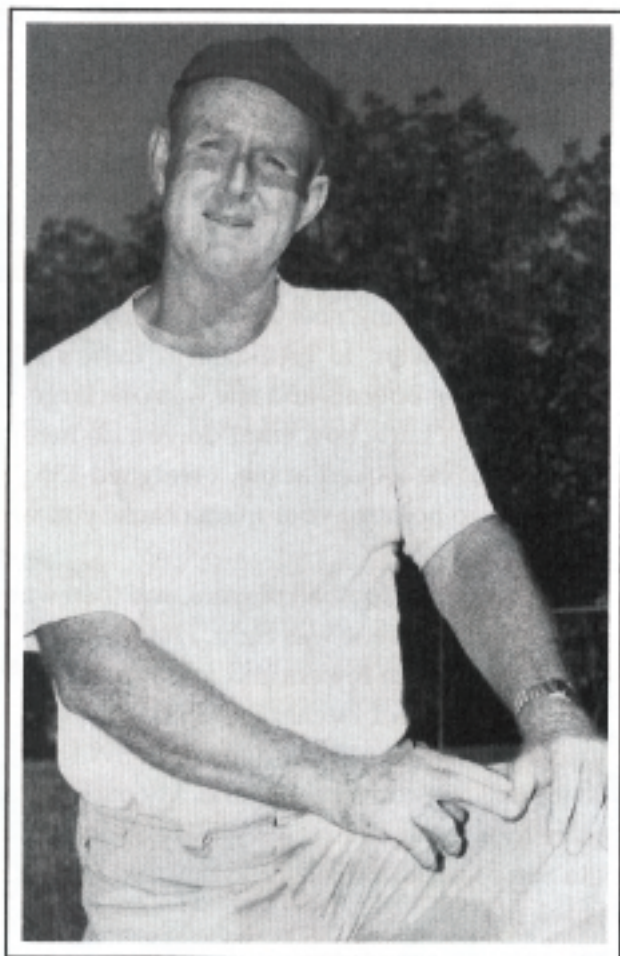
*Submitted by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## Keep on Walking in Alpine

We were playing Sul Ross in football and winning by a wide margin. Dave Slaughter was their football coach and after a questionable call, got super angry. Coach Slaughter walked out on the game field and yelled at the officials, who immediately threw a flag and penalized Sul Ross 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct. Coach Slaughter continued to yell as he kept walking towards the officials and they called a second 15-yard penalty on him for unsportsmanlike conduct. Coach Slaughter slowed down, but kept walking. The main official walked up to Coach Slaughter and told him that he was going to step off one yard for every step that Coach Slaughter took. Coach Slaughter called two of his players and told them to come out on the field. When they got there, Slaughter told his players to pick him up and carry him to the sidelines. The officials just stood there and looked, they looked at each other and broke up laughing. As the opposing coach, Coach Jowers enjoyed every minute of it!

## Offensive Line... Dummy

One year, Coach Jowers had this big old lineman that would always act like he was hurt when he got real hot or tired. He did this little stunt several times until Coach Jowers finally found out what he was doing. One day he acted hurt again and Coach told the offensive team to line up and run right over this player. Before they could snap the ball, he was all right.



*Coach Jowers on the football field.  
(Courtesy of Keith Hoffman)*

## Caddo Sanders

My first contact with Coach Jowers was in January 1952. He called while I was still in college at Ranger Junior College. He said that he was Milton Jowers at Southwest Texas and I asked him where is Southwest Texas? He told me that it was in San Marcos. I did not even know where San Marcos was located. He told me that the town was half way between Austin and San Antonio. He said that he wanted me to come to school down there. I asked him how in the world was I supposed to get down there since I did not have a car. He said, "Then, hitchhike."

I hitchhiked to San Marcos and met him in his office. We visited a while and he offered me a full scholarship if I would come to school there at mid-semester. I accepted and moved into the athletic dorm named Bobcat #2. My roommate was a big tackle named Gene Smith, and did he stutter. I went home eventually for a short visit and my dad said, "Boy, what are they teaching you down there. You can't even talk anymore." I was stuttering now more than my roommate was.

The first morning I went to breakfast in Irene's kitchen. Irene was the only cook for the Bobcats and she was one large woman. She looked at me and said, "Little boy, what do you do here?" I told her that I played football. She looked at me, I weighed 135 pounds, and she said, "You better go home to your mama cause you will get killed down here."

I looked at the size of the football players, and then walked around the campus, and I thought Irene was right. I had better go back home to Hillsboro. I went to Coach Jowers and told him that my uncle had died and I had to go home. I hitchhiked home and my daddy said, "Boy, what are you doing here?" I told him that SWT was a big place and I think that I will just come back home. My daddy told me to get in the car and he took me back to the highway and told me to get out and go back to San Marcos and tell everyone that I was coming back and coming back to stay.

When I got back to San Marcos I went to Coach Jowers' office and he looked up and said, "Caddo your uncle didn't die did he?" I said "No, but I thought he did."

*Submitted by Caddo Sanders*

On one play, Caddo was supposed to block for the other back but messed up and missed his block. Coach Jowers screamed at him that he was supposed to block. Caddo told Jowers that he was a runner, not a blocker. I think that won over Coach Jowers to Caddo right there.

## Sounded Like God

I wonder if Coach Jowers is up there listening to all these stories. They're all good. I was so afraid of him. He called me once on the phone and he said, "This is Coach Jowers." I thought I was going to die right there—it sounded like God. He said, "I need to talk to Caddo right away." I said, "I don't know where he is but I'll go find him." And I ran all over town looking for him. You know you were just so afraid of him. He wanted Caddo.

He did a speech at Caddo's football banquet and then we went to East Texas and watched y'all's team play basketball. And Coach Jowers paid for our room, food, everything.

He was the sweetest thing to me. And I thought—*I was afraid of this guy all this time?* But I had reason to be. He was so mean.

*Submitted by Ruby Sanders, Caddo's wife*

## Two Left Shoes

Jerry Cole made All-American in football his junior year and in his senior year he made All-American defensive halfback. We went to East Texas to play and unknowingly, Jerry brought two left shoes. He went to Coach Jowers and said, "Coach, I got two left shoes. I didn't bring my right shoe."

Jowers: "So?"

Cole: "Coach, I got two left shoes?"

Jowers: "What do you want me to do about it?"

Cole: "Coach, I got two left shoes."

Jowers: "I don't have anything to do with it. We're in East Texas what do you want me to do?"

Cole: "Do you think you could ask the other team?"

Jowers: "No, I ain't talking with them."

So it was Friday night, we worked out the day before the game. Well, he put on those two left shoes and walked out. He got down in his stance and these two kids are watching and keep pointing saying, "Look, he's got two left feet. He's got two left feet." So they asked Cole, "Why do you have two left feet?"

Cole looks down and says, "Because they don't know what side I'm going to run."

Jerry knew that he'd need his shoes. The next day rolled around and Jerry still had two left shoes. He made a call the night before to somebody in San Marcos, "Are you coming to the game? Bring me a right foot shoe." So, the game got started and we're out on the field and I looked up and whoever he called is coming in. They had arrived late.

Cole: "Coach Jowers, my friend is coming in and he's got my right shoe."

Jowers: "What's he going to do with it, is he going to use it?"

Cole: "No, but it's my right shoe..."

Jowers: "Get your butt out there and start playing."

Cole played the whole ball game with two left shoes on. That's that mean guy. The game is over with and we've showered. Coach wants to see him. He comes out and Coach Jowers says, "Is your mom real sick?" Cole answered, "Yes sir, she has cancer." Coach Jowers says, "Get in the car."

He went with Coach Jowers, who took him home and let him spend the night with his mother. That's the same mean guy that wouldn't let him wear a right and a left shoe.

Jerry says it got real quiet, "He took me home so I could see my mother and you don't get much nicer than that."

*Submitted by Jerry Cole*

## **A Pill for Joe Bednarski**

In 1964 the week of homecoming a scout from the San Francisco 49ers had taken Wallace Dickey and me (Jerry Cole) out to eat. The cheerleaders gave us a good luck note in a giant capsule. We took the note out and filled the capsule with sugar and pepper. It was about twice the size of a regular medical pill.

We gave the pill to Joe Bednarski about thirty minutes before game time and told him that the 49er scout had given it to us and that it was the kind that the pros took. Within two minutes after taking the pill, Joe's eyes dilated, his nostril flared, and he was like a caged bull kicking and snorting – hollering – “bring on those GD Lumberjacks” (we were playing Stephen F. Austin). The first half was unbelievable. The very best half game Joe ever played.

However at half time he was totally worn out and wanted to know if we had another pill. Needless to say he did not pee a drop the second half. The very worst half he ever played. Got his ass chewed out Monday during film review for not being in shape. He had to stay late all that week and run extra wind sprints. Lady Luck was with Wallace and me because Coach Jowers never found out about the pill.

*Submitted by Jerry Cole*

## **Fight Night Recruit**

Celestino Avila came to SWT as a thin, tall and lanky athlete from Donna, Texas. He had been a great high school athlete and had played all four major sports and had been All-District in each of them. He had made All South Texas and all-everything in football, yet he was not considered a great college prospect.

Jack Henry, who was the football coach at SWT at that time, recruited Celestino with the hopes that he would grow and become a good college football player. Coach Henry retired that first season that Celestino was here and Coach Jowers took over the team. It was not long after Coach Jowers took the head coaching job, that Celestino's high school coach told him that for some reason Coach Jowers was

not pleased with Celestino's play and that if he did not start doing better, he might take away his scholarship.

As things worked out for Celestino, he entered the all-college fight night that first spring and had only one fight. He knocked his opponent out so quickly that he just lay on the floor and his legs started twitching. Coach Jowers saw this fight and became more interested in Celestino. Coach did not know this young man. He did not know his heart, his dedication, how smart he was and all the intangibles that go into a successful individual. So, Celestino started getting more attention at practice and at games and this little thin, lanky boy from Donna became one of the best ends in the history of SWT football. He was named All-Conference both for offense and defense, an honor very few people ever received. This same little Valley boy then proceeded to go to medical school in Mexico and now is a super successful doctor back in his home town of Donna, Texas. I have to add that he is one of my very best friends.

## **Broken Hand**

I came to San Marcos from Burnet, Texas. I played against the 10-0 team in the 1963-64 season. I broke my hand during the summer while working at Inks Lake State Park (not sure how). Knowing I was to play football in September, I took the cast off early and it hadn't healed completely. My performance was less than spectacular as it was still swollen and I could not grip the ball normally.

Needless to say, Coach Jowers was not pleased and I thought my playing days at SWT were limited. Coach Jowers was considering dropping my scholarship due to my poor performance and showing up with a broken hand. I spent a lot of time watching for a while, playing in the defensive backfield, but finally got my chance, moving from defensive back to quarterback. Why he made the switch from defense to offense has always been a puzzle.

Dan Leineweber was a senior when I arrived and they planned to initiate me as a backup, but with a broken hand, they couldn't because I couldn't throw the ball. (Of course some of my receivers would



say that I couldn't throw even when my hand got well – like David Morrison, Cliff Mitchell, Wade Key, Jerry Cole, and Eddie Franz.) We didn't have to throw much with running backs like Rex Turner, Jan Mohel, Fred Frieling, David Morrison, Eddie Howell, Pump Up Bednorski, Renaldo Farias, Louis Simmonds, and of course, Reese Morrison. Those were fun days when all you had to do was hand the ball off and “watch ‘em run.” Throw in an occasional pass to keep everyone honest.

*Submitted by Jesse Perkins*

*P.S. I have to add this little addendum to Jesse's remarks. He came here with a broken left hand and we were told that he got it broken in a fight but Jesse does not remember. We knew that he was not too tall but the entire group of our starting backfield when Jesse first arrived were all about the same height as he was. Anyway after the coaches got straightened out as to what position was best suited for him and the team, it was pretty easy to play that little dude as a quarterback because he was quick, could run with the ball, and could throw it. He did have an awful good bunch of running backs to play with, but in Jesse's senior year he was voted by the conference coaches as the offensive player of the year in the Lone Star Conference. He really was a good player.*

*Vernon McDonald*

## **Freshman Signal Caller**

I started as a redshirt freshman quarterback, in Coach Jowers' last year of coaching football. Dan Leineweber had graduated having just led the Bobcats to a perfect 10-0 season the previous year, which was a very hard act to follow, along with my being a greenhorn freshman under Jowers.

We had a number of great upperclassmen on the team and had a relatively good year despite having other rookies like myself.

Early in the season I was calling most all the plays rather than coaches calling in plays from the sideline. We had a great running game and Coach Jowers was not a tremendous fan of the forward

pass. I would call a pass play occasionally but Coach Jowers liked the head banging, hard nose, three yards and a cloud of dust method of scoring. (As everyone knew.)

We had a good drive going, getting into the opposing team's red zone and I decided to call a pass play and unfortunately it was "intercepted." With the offense coming to the sideline, I tried to steer clear of the coaching staff, but Coach Jowers had the glare on me when I reached the sideline. All he said was "what the hell are you doing?" This freshman did not throw another interception all season. This may be the only record this quarterback still holds at Texas State, one interception for the entire season. Coach Jowers knew how to get results. He usually called all the pass plays for the remainder of the season also.

*Submitted by Jesse Perkins*

## **When Your Number is Called – Remember to Go In**

This is what I am going to say about Reese Morrison and then I will try to tell you what he said to me one morning at church. Reese was probably the best running back in the history of this school. He was big, 210–215, fast, held the Lone Star Conference High Hurdle record for years and years, very durable. He was drafted by the Cleveland Browns and played seven or eight years of pro football.

### **This is his story.**

Reese was a freshman and Coach Jowers had him playing on the kick-off team, the punt return team, and anything else that a freshman could do to help a little. The Bobcats were playing Lackland Air Force Base (San Antonio) the first game of the season. The Bobcats were getting ready to receive a punt during the early part of the game. As the punt was made, Reese looked up and saw that he was not even on the field and he was supposed to be back to catch the punt. Reese said that he knew that he was in bad trouble with Coach Jowers and tried to stay away from him. Coach grabbed Reese by the facemask and shook him and told him to go sit on the bench. Coach

Miller came over to him and said for him to keep his head up because Coach Jowers was going to put him back in after a little bit and on offense. He said, "Reese, if you ever ran hard in your life, you better run hard as soon as your play is called." Sure enough Coach put Reese back in without even looking at him and they called Reese's play and he went 79 yards for a touchdown. The next time that he went into the game they called his play again and Reese went 60 yards for another touchdown.

The Bobcats won the game and Reese hurried into and out of the shower and tried to miss Coach Jowers. Coach caught him anyway. He said that he would see him Monday. Reese said that he sweated like a dog all weekend. He dreaded for Monday to come around. Monday did come around and Reese went in to see Coach Jowers and Coach told him that he had better remember when he was supposed to go on to the field and that he had made a couple of good runs and that was about it. He had worried all weekend and Coach just let him sweat.

*Submitted by Reese Morrison and Vernon McDonald*

## **Late for the Bus**

How about those two guys who showed up late for the bus? Those were the Morrison boys, Reese and David. They were great football players. Reese played for the Cleveland Browns for 10 years. David played for the Oakland Raiders.

We were in San Angelo and had a pre-game meal scheduled for 3 p.m. So, we got on the bus and ate the pre-game meal at 3 p.m. Coach Jowers got on the bus and the bus was full of people. Coach Jowers said, "What time is it?" The bus driver said, "It's 3 o'clock."

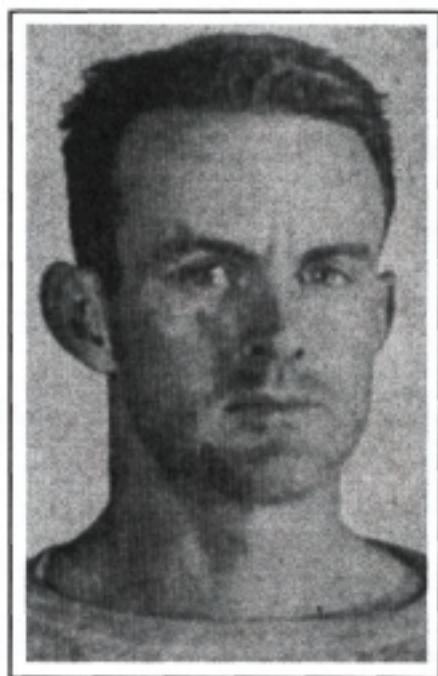
Coach Jowers turned around and said, "Is everybody on?" Somebody yelled, "Coach, David and Reese aren't here yet!" Jowers turned to the bus driver and said, "Is it 3 o'clock? Let's go."

So the bus driver put it into gear and we just barely started. Again, somebody hollered, "Coach, here comes David and Reese." Coach said, "What do you want me to do about it?" "But Coach, its David

and Reese." Jowers turned to the bus driver and says, "Put it in gear and let's go."

And here's the two best players coming out of the room and they saw the bus take off. I don't remember how far, about a half mile. These two guys chase the bus every inch of the way, every inch. He wouldn't stop the bus and let them get on.

*Submitted by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*



*Young Coach Jowers*

## **Advanced Communication Technology**

Back in the early 60s, the Bobcats had a big old boy from Taylor, Texas by the name of James Heffernan. He was on a half football scholarship and a half basketball scholarship. During a football game in Beaumont between SWT and Lamar Tech it was getting very close near the end of the game. The Bobcats were ahead in the score 7 to 0. Dee White, our starting quarterback, had scored the only touchdown

in the game. The Lamar team started running plays over our big tackle, James Heffernan.

Coach Jowers had decided for this game that he would stay on top of the press box with a radio and let Coach Bill Miller stay on the field with the team and with another radio. Coach could talk to Coach Miller anytime that he wanted. During this last big push over our tackle Coach Jowers decided to tell Coach Miller to take Heffernan out of the game. He started trying to talk to Coach Miller over the radio and Billy would not answer him. Coach Jowers got louder and louder saying, "Billy, get Heffernan out of the game." He looked down on our team and Billy had laid the radio down on the bench so he could not hear Coach Jowers.

Coach kept getting louder and louder hollering at Coach Miller to take Heffernan out of the game. Finally some man about half way down the field stood up and yelled at the top of his lungs, "For God's sake, take Heffernan out!" Billy heard this man and immediately picked up his radio and got the word from Coach Jowers to take Heffernan out of the game. We did eventually win the game 7-0 thanks to the fan in the stands.

## Hang it Up

Darrell Hortness took a basketball class under Coach Jowers. The class would meet every once in a while on the bottom floor of the two gyms that we had back then. This particular day, Coach had the class practicing on lay-ups. He explained how you should always hit the backboard first and let the ball bounce back into the goal. He got all the class in two lines and they all started shooting lay-ups. When it was Darrell's turn he ran real fast and shot the lay-up properly and turned his back to sort of hit the wall easily and sure enough there was a hook in the wall that had been holding up a tennis net and Darrell turned and hooked himself in the rear on this hook. Coach almost died laughing at Darrell hooked to the wall. He was not hurt. It was just his shorts that were caught.

*Submitted by Darrell Hortness and Vernon McDonald*

## Rub It In!

Reese Morrison has already told something about the Bobcats beating East Texas 52-0 and Darrell said that Coach Jowers had said after the game that he wished that he had punted on the last down from about the East Texas' 10-yard line and kicked the ball out of the stadium. As everyone around here already knew, as usual, Coach Jowers wanted to not only beat East Texas, but he wanted to rub the victory in.

*Submitted by Darrell Hortness*

## Lone Star Conference Champions

# 1963

## Southwest Texas State College BOBCATS



*10-0 Season*

## **Toughest Running Back He Ever Coached**

Leo Chafin, originally from Georgetown, Texas played two years of football at Southwestern University in Georgetown. Southwestern dropped their football program and Leo transferred to Southwest Texas to play his last two years. Coach Jowers said that Leo was the toughest running back that he had ever coached. He played two years at Southwest Texas State and the only injury that he ever had was an ingrown toenail. Leo was drafted by the Cleveland Browns.

## **Ice Cream**

Wallings Creamery was a popular business in San Marcos and from time to time the delivery truck would stop at Bobcat Hall. On this particular day, the truck stopped, the driver got out, and two or three Bobcats "helped themselves" to a container of chocolate ice cream. Well, every Bobcat in Bobcat #2 Hall started yelling "ice cream." In walks Coach Jowers. Well, you could have heard a pin drop. "Where did this ice cream come from?" was the question. "We found it." And Coach said, "Where?" "Off a truck," was the reply from Roland McFall. "Who paid for it?" asked Coach. "Nobody" was the answer received.

After Coach determined that the ice cream had been stolen, he issued the following order, "By 6 o'clock I want a receipt from Walling showing that the ice cream has been paid for!"

Back in those days you couldn't have gotten \$15 out of the whole football team putting their money together. So Roland McFall and Eugene Havelka went to Wallings, stole a blank receipt, wrote it out and gave it to Coach Jowers. Can you imagine what would have happened if Coach had found out about the receipt!?

*Submitted by Leo Chafin*

## **Jowers and Hippies**

During the years when Coach Jowers had an office in the old Strahan Gym, a young man visibly identifiable as a “hippie” entered Coach’s office announcing that he wanted to see Coach Jowers. Coach said, “I’m Jowers, just what do you want to see me about?” The young man with long hair and obviously not an athlete announced that he wanted to rent Strahan Gym for a protest. Coach stood, walked around his desk and said, “You’re going to get your protest right now!” The young man took off rather hastily, never to be seen again.

*Submitted by Leo Chafin*

## **Safety Belts Needed**

From time to time, Coach Jowers would go on speaking engagements. Vance Wynn, the public relations man for SWT, would often go with him. Vance had a new 98 Oldsmobile and said he would drive. When the two men got into the car to leave, Coach saw the seat belts and said, “What in the hell are these?” Vance explained to Coach that they were for this safety. “They’re not for me,” said Coach. As they continued on their journey and reached the open highway, Vance “kicked” the Olds up to 95 miles per hour. Vance looked over to see Coach Jowers reaching for this seat belt saying, “How in the hell do these things work?” For the remainder of the trip, Coach used his seatbelt.

*Submitted by Leo Chafin*

## **Tough – Why Don’t You Play Like That?**

In 1951 the Bobcats played Gary Air Base, beat them 54-0 and then we played Texas Lutheran College and beat them 46-0.

Our next game would be with Texas A&I, a well-known rival. Dewey Mayhew was the coach at A&I, and Coach Jowers “had no love for him.”

Coach Jowers gave a “pep-talk” on Wednesday before every game. Well, the week before the A&I game was no different. He began by



saying, "We've had two easy games and if you think this one is going to be easy "think again!" He then proceeded to say how tough he thought the game would be. I was listening but smiling and grimacing at the same time. Coach said, "Chafin, you find this to be funny!" I said, "No sir, this is going to be tough, the way I like them." Coach (Jowers) then responded with, "Why don't you play one like that?!"

We beat Texas A&I 41 to 6 and I had 189 yards rushing!

*Submitted by Leo Chafin*

## **Coaches Pre Game Meal on the Bus – Nutrament**

Fort Stockton. We stayed at the Sands Hotel in Fort Stockton. The football team always stayed there. Anyway, Coach Jowers got this idea and decided that this new thing, Nutrament, would be the best pre-game meal. We were going to play Sul Ross. So everyone got this Nutrament for the pregame meal. Coach Jowers said, "We're not eating a pre-game meal, I'm going to get a couple of cases of that Nutrament for pre game and we're going to drink it on the bus."

There were four of us. Coach Jowers, Coach Billy Miller, Al Reeh, and me. So we started up and Coach told the manager, "Undo that Nutrament and give everyone a can." It was all iced down. So the manager popped a top and drank a Nutrament. (Vernon's comment: "Nutrament looks bad, tastes bad, smells bad and I wouldn't drink it if my life depended on it.") The players all drank the Nutrament.

Ol' Billy Miller and Al Reeh said, "We didn't eat a pre-game meal, what are we going to eat? I'm hungry." Bill says, "Coach Mac, ask Coach Jowers if we can have some Nutrament."

Mac: Crap, that stuff is bad...you don't want any Nutrament," but you know if you can't have it, you want it bad.

I said, "Coach, Coach"

Jowers: "What do you want?"

Mac: "Are we going to have pre-game meal?"

Jowers: "You know we're not."

Mac: "Can Bill, Al and I have some Nutrament?"

Jowers: "We aren't giving you free loaders \$3.00 for nothing. Lock that stuff up."

The manager closes it up and locks that Nutrament up.

Mac: "I'd give \$60.00 for a can of that Nutrament. We got to the game and we were starving. I wanted Nutrament so bad, if Coach Jowers hadn't been around, I would have tried to drink every can there. There were a bunch of cans left in there.

You guys that played for him, you know that he always gave us spearmint gum before the game. Well, he didn't have any spearmint gum, so Coach Jowers said, "McDonald, let's go down here and get us some gum."

Coach and I go to this little store about a block and half away. Jowers goes down this aisle looking for gum, while I go three aisles away. While he's buying some gum, I went over there and bought three candy bars. I put them in my pocket, went up there, paid for them and walked outside. Coach Jowers came out and we went back to the field.

When we got back, I went looking for Bill and Al. I couldn't find them so, I started whistling... three strong whistles. There down at the far end of the stands, they were both there waving their arms. Here were three assistant coaches for a college football team hiding under the stands. I ran down there and they were eating a hot dog under the stands. "We got you a hot dog, Mac." "I got you a bar of candy." I passed out three bars of candy.

There we were, the three of us, under the bleachers, sneaking candy and a hot dog. I still can't believe it, the three of us hiding and eating under the stands. If I ever told the truth, that is the truth. I still can't believe it. Hiding under the stands eating a hot dog.

*Submitted by the group at Lewis Gilcrease's house*

## **Penny Post Card**

Looking back, some have realized that one of the keys to Jowers success was his recruitment prowess. He went after them and brought them back—whatever the cost. I had been recruited by East Texas with several of our athletes at Tarleton (including Marvin Brown who plagued us for three years). However, after visiting SWT some of us changed—including Wendel Lackey and Cedric Bettis.

We knew he wanted us badly. It was that penny post-card from Jowers that closed the deal for me!

*Submitted by Pence Dacus*



*Coach Jowers in front of the trophy case.  
(Courtesy of Jimmy Jowers)*

## Deer Hunting

After our last football season, Billy Charles McDoniel came by one afternoon and said, "We need to go kill a deer!" He needed some meat. We drove out the Devils Backbone road and came up on an old doe. It was dark so I turned my lights on it and Billy Charles shot it. Headlights from a car came on about 50 yards away and it was Blackie Bower the game warden! He took our gun and said to follow him back to town. I told Billy Charles that Coach Parker would clean our plates and send me back to Burnet. Billy Charles had a wife and a daughter, and was graduating. The game warden took us to the jail there in San Marcos. Mr. Bill Albright was the police chief there and he told Bowers that he would take over. Bowers left and Mr. Albright called Jowers. After about 30 minuets Coach Jowers came strolling in with a little grin on his lips.

I told Billy Charles that I would be sent home to work in the graphite mine the rest of my life. After about 30 minutes Coach Jowers came out and told me to go to the dorm and Billy Charles to go home to his wife and kids where he should have been all-night. He said, "I'll deal with you guys later!"

We figured he would call us in the following day. School ended and I got drafted in October 1958 and Billy Charles graduated and moved to San Saba. I went over seas and spent 18 months in Germany. I returned home got married and finished my 12 hours of English and speech. I graduated in 1961 and worked at the college stadium mowing all summer so my wife and I could eat.

I needed a coaching job and Coach Jowers said I could get the job in Buda if I didn't talk myself out of it... In other words keep my mouth shut! I got the job and began working there. Three years had passed and not a word from Coach Jowers and Billy Charles said he hadn't heard anything either.

Football started and SWT was going to play A&I. Coach Jowers called me in Buda and said he wanted to borrow my bleachers for the end zone. I said I would ask my superintendent, Mr. Ferguson. Jowers said no need, he had already talked to Elmer and he would be over about noon. He showed up about lunchtime and I asked if he would like to eat with me. He said sure, he always liked free meals.

Coach and I were having hamburger steaks, a little piece of ground meat about the size of a quarter. He looked over those little half-ass glasses and said, "I BET THAT OLD DEER MEAT WOULD TASTE BETTER THAN THIS." He smiled knowing damn well I had been sweating him out over three years. I'm sure he would see me and Bill Charles and think I'm going to let them guys sweat a little more. He knew we were old country boys doing what we had done all our lives.

*Submitted by Alvin (Pee Wee) Woods*

## Recruiting Story – Traveling First Class

Dave Rutherford was playing football at TCU and wanted to come to Southwest Texas to play for Coach Jowers. He called Coach Jowers and Jowers told him he had a place for Dave if he would come on down. Being short of funds, Dave asked Coach Jowers if he would reimburse him for his meals when he came down. Coach Jowers allegedly agreed.

Being really short of funds, Dave proceeded to ship his luggage to Coach Jowers COD! Then he hitchhiked to San Marcos. When he arrived, he asked Coach Jowers for the meal reimbursement. Coach Jowers told him since he had to pay the luggage COD charges, Dave could pay for his own meal. Dave still laughs about it. That started a unique relationship between the two.

*Submitted by Bruce Gregg*

## Handball

Do you remember when Kraut (Jerome Nortman) got called down by Jowers for playing handball? We were up in Leon's room; Leon, Kraut and myself. And Coach Jowers came up the far side. Coach Jowers' nickname was Daddy Redlegs. So he called, "Here comes Daddy Redlegs." So, Leon, Corky Nelson and myself hit the floor. We didn't want to be seen by Coach Jowers. And we said, "Kraut, you dumb son of a gun." Kraut says, "He doesn't know who I am." Jowers paused for a brief second and then just kept on walking.

Well the next morning—it was a Saturday morning—somebody came up, woke us up and said "Kraut—Coach Jowers wants to play handball with you." Coach Jowers was a pretty good handball player. I was still asleep, but I got up and told Leon and Corky, "Let's go downstairs and watch." Well, the first eight shots didn't hit the wall, they hit Kraut in the back of the head. And you know how Kraut was... well, his next eight shots hit Coach Jowers in the back of the head. And we were sitting up there, trying not to laugh. It was just a war.

Kraut never said a word and Jowers never said a word. But that shows you that hardheaded German Coach Jowers almost beat you to death playing handball. I told Krautt, "Kraut, I think he recognized your voice."

*Submitted by Terry Darden*

## 15-Yard Penalty

The Bobcat football team was playing at Sam Houston State in a Homecoming game in 1952 on a bright, sunny day. Both teams had winning records and this was a real "grudge match." Both teams also had very good quarterbacks, Pence Dacus for the Bobcats and Cotton Gottleib for the Bearcats.

Toward the end of the game, we were ahead by a touch down and we got a 15-yard penalty. Then we got another 15 yarder pushing us from the 50 to the 20-yard line. Coach Jowers confronted the referees wanting to know what those penalties were for. The ref replied, "Coaching from the sidelines." Coach Jowers said, "Just give us 15 more yards. We have the game won anyhow."

*Submitted by Leo Chafin*



*Coach Jowers' 1953 Football Team.*

## Another Sul Ross Game

The Bobcats were playing Sul Ross at Evans Field in 1952. Coach Jowers had put in a "tackle eligible" pass play. Toward the end of the game Pence Dacus called the play. Hugh Berry was way down field when Pence threw to him, but didn't catch the pass. The referee called pass interference on the goal line. We scored and won the game.

The Coach from Sul Ross met Coach Jowers in the middle of the field and started "bad mouthing" Coach about the tackle eligible play. He proceeded to threaten Coach and said, "Wait until you come to Sul Ross next year, we're going to whip you 50 to 0." Coach replied, "You better believe we'll be there!"

*Submitted by Leo Chafin*

## Hello House!

Coach Jowers decided that he and I should travel to Huntsville to scout a conference basketball game one day in January years ago. We went in his car and it was cold. After the game we got a quick meal at the edge of Huntsville and he said to be sure that I got a receipt. I got the receipt as we hurried out of the restaurant and headed back to San Marcos.

We were making good time until we crossed the intersection of the highway that went from Austin to Columbus. At about this particular time and place his car started coughing and sure enough we played out of gas. It was now about 1:00 a.m. and it was extremely cold. The first thing that Coach did was to locate a house off the road, but it was dark and lonely looking. He told me to stay with the car, which I was thankful for, and he sort of sauntered down a gravel path toward this darkened house. All along the way Coach yelled, "Hello, the House." He said this several times and I felt like he might have been slightly nervous, but knowing him like I did, I was surely wrong. He finally reached the porch of this dark house and still yelled "Hello, the House" and found out that it was empty. Big deal. No help and no gas and no phone and no anything. He returned to the car and me and we started yelling at vehicles as they sped past us.

We yelled at cars and buses and trucks and anything that came by. Coach finally started picking up rocks and would throw them at the trucks that would not even slow down. It was really getting cold and we had now moved an inch in an hour or so. Finally an old man in an old, beat up car stopped and gave us a ride to Bastrop. He let us out at the first open service station and we quickly talked the man in charge to let us rent a gas can and also let us purchase a couple of gallons of gasoline to take back with us to Coach's car.

There was a huge, long truck there and it was getting ready to leave and go our way. Coach ran over and asked him for a ride to our car. He told us to jump in and he started up the motor of his truck. That truck had 12 or 14 forward gears and this driver used them all. He would drive in one gear until a little more speed would start and then he would go to another gear. I had never seen a vehicle with all these forward gears. Finally Coach asked him what he was hauling. The driver said that he was coming from the valley and had 12,000 pounds of carrots, of all things.

We finally got back to Coach's car and got out and opened the cap to his gas tank and found out that he had a sunken pipe to his tank and we could not reach the gas tank because of this distance. Coach started just sloshing the gas hoping to get some into the pipe that lead to the tank and nothing worked. Finally Coach asked me to see if we had any more unused paper in the car because it was getting colder and we really were cold. I told him that we had used all the paper for our scouting notes. Coach told me to give him the notes and he rolled them up into a round funnel and put the funnel into this pipe and poured all the rest of the gasoline into the tank. When asked what to do with our good notes from the game? Coach said, "Throw them in the ditch and let's get out of here." I did, and we headed back to Bastrop to get more gas and then home.

The next day Coach called me into his office and asked me if I had the receipt from the night before for a last meal. I told him that I did but that we were in such a hurry I had not gotten a signature on it. He asked me for the name of the place where we had eaten and I told him that it was called the Gold Triangle. He quickly got the



receipt and wrote across the bottom of it "Sam Golden." Coach said desperate times make for desperate decisions and all ended well.

## **Coach Jowers vs Coach Vest**

During the 1940s and 1950s there was only one basketball gym at Southwest Texas. There were two levels of courts. The top level was for basketball and volleyball for our athletic department. The floor beneath the top floor was for Physical Education classes and intramurals. At one end of this lower gym, there were four handball courts that were side by side. There was an alleyway or walkway that one could walk down to see each of the four courts. A person could stand on this walkway and look down into the handball courts.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s Coach Jowers and Coach Vest would play handball almost every day before basketball practice would start. Both of these coaches were excellent handball players. They always played handball viciously. It was not long until many of the football players would gather around the handball courts to watch this "blood and guts" handball match. The reason the football players were so interested was it was very important to everyone to find out who won. If Coach Vest won, Coach Jowers was mad and would work the devil out of his linemen and the opposite was true if Coach Jowers won. The players really sweated out these handball matches.

## **Handball Strategy**

Coach Jowers loved to play handball. When I was in school and shortly after I returned, Coach would play anyone from faculty to students. He did not care and furthermore he almost always won. Coach was vicious as to how he played. The main strategy to winning in handball is to get yourself stationed in the center of the court and about midway between the front and back wall. Anytime his opponent got in this position, Coach would hit them anywhere in the back. This included from their head to their feet. It never took long for his opponent to get in the backcourt and Coach would get where

he wanted and then he would win. No matter who he was playing, he always played this way.

One time SWT was having an intramural doubles handball tournament. Now this was not racquetball. It was handball and nothing was used except your hand to hit the ball. He did not have a partner and informed me that I was going to be his partner. I told him that I did not even know how to play since I had watched but never played the game. He told me to just stay out of the way. When it was my time to serve, he said just hit the ball to the front wall and retreat to a back corner. I did exactly what he said and right now in my trophy case is the first place medal that we won in the All College Handball Tournament. We never lost a single game. He was really good.

## **What Happens When You Give Coach Jowers a Nudge**

Coach Jowers was standing in front of the Jackson Tailor shop with his hands in the pockets of his khaki pants. I, Clovis Barker, was returning from the post office and saw Coach standing there talking with his good friend, Buck Payne. On my way to get my cleaning, I passed Coach and just sort of nudged him pretty good in the back and then walked into the cleaners. I quickly looked back and because of my nudge, Coach had fallen over on top of Buck Payne.

While in the cleaners, Coach came up behind me and grabbed me around my body and at the same time had my arms pinned to my side. He squeezed me so hard that he mashed my fountain pen in my pocket and ink ran all down my shirt. He had really put a bear hug on me.

*Submitted by Clovis Barker*

## **Bank Etiquette**

One day Coach Jowers came in the bank and I guess I'd said something to him because the next thing I knew, he hit me in the gut and knocked the wind out of me. I got my wind back and I had to say something back to him and I did. Then he grabbed me around

the neck with his arm and with this headlock on me, we fell against a nearby desk. The desk scooted away with us and there we lay, on the lobby floor, right in the center of the old State Bank and Trust Co. We laid there for a moment and he still had me in that headlock and he says, "You give?" I weakly said, "Yes, I guess so."

*Submitted by Clovis Barker*

## **Hays County Sheriff Bobby Kinser**

Bobby Kinser was watching football practice one day back in the 50s and Coach Jowers was the football coach. He had gotten to practice sort of late and when he arrived, he could tell the Bobcats were not having a very good practice.

At the end of practice, Coach Jowers ran and ran the whole team. When he finally finished practice, he told the team to go in and then walked over toward Bobby and his son. Coach acknowledged Bobby by saying hello. Bobby asked Coach when they were leaving for the East Texas game? Coach looked at Bobby and said, "Are you going?" Bobby told him no, that he was just wondering when they were leaving for the game. Coach Jowers said, "If you are not going, what business is it of yours when we're going?" And with that said, Coach turned away and went up to the dressing room and left Bobby and his son standing there.

*As told by Bobby Kinser to Vernon McDonald*

## **Slow Down—Rocks Falling**

While the Job Corps was still Gary Air Force Base, Coach was having a problem with an Air Force guy who had a fast little convertible. This guy would come down the road that came in front of Coach's home as fast as he could, then just gun his motor. Coach Jowers got him to stop one day and told him that he had a couple of children who played outside and that they might be in or near the street and he wished that he would at least slow down when he came in front of his house. This soldier would not slow down not even a little bit.

One day Coach heard him coming and he had found a huge round boulder and had put it on the edge of his yard, which was above the road. As the car got near, Coach shoved the big rock down the hill and onto the road just in front of this little car. The driver whirled his car off the other side of the road and slid from side to side to avoid hitting the rock and never came that way again. I think Coach got his point across.

## **Windshield Insurance Money**

One time Coach Jowers was driving in his green pickup from the gym after a practice. A big dump truck passed him and a rock fell out of the truck and hit Coach's windshield, knocking a big hole in it. The truck didn't stop.

Coach caught up with the truck and blew his horn several times, but the truck continued down the road at a pretty good speed. Finally Coach passed the big truck and pulled sharply in front of him and forced the truck off the road and made him stop. He told the driver what had happened and told him that he'd be buying a new windshield.

I guess the driver believed him because after exchanging addresses, the driver left. Coach found out how much a new windshield would cost and sent the bill to the truck driver who paid Coach. Then Coach got an old tire patch that would stick through the windshield and put a pin through the part that was sticking through and never did replace the windshield. He said that it was up to him to decide to replace the windshield or not, but that truck driver had no choice except to pay him — and he did.

## **8:00 a.m. Classes**

When we played football or basketball in Alpine, we always came home immediately after the game. Normally, we would first drive to Del Rio and get gasoline and Coach would let everyone get water. He would not let us get cokes or anything other than water and then we would drive on to San Marcos and get in about 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. and he would insist that we meet our 8:00 a.m. classes.

## **River Helper**

Coach Jowers lived on a high bank of the Brazos River, which ran directly behind his house. One day he needed to go down to the river and get his pump that he used to pump the water out of the river to water his yard and trees and strawberries. He asked me to go with him. Before he started down the steep embankment to get his pump, he handed me a long rope. He told me that he was going to wrap that rope around himself and that I was supposed to hold onto the other end and make sure that he did not slip and fall into the river. He also said that if I failed to keep him from falling into the river that I had better follow him into the water. He was not going to let me stay on the bank while he was in the river. I wrapped the rope around me and also held onto a tree. I wanted to make sure that neither of us ended up in the river.

## **Psychology of Preparation**

Coach had lots of fruit trees planted in his large garden that was beside his house out on the Blanco River. He explained to me one day how these trees got planted there. When he had a real important basketball game, he would get one of those trees and work most of the day digging and planting the thing. He was trying to keep his mind off the game. Now after several years of doing this he would go out into the garden where the trees were and tell you what kind of tree was planted there and then tell you who his team played that night. Unbelievable...

## Taking Your Medicine

Coach loved to read all the *U.S. News and World Report* and *Time Magazine*. When he just wanted to read, he would always read westerns. He liked Louis L'Amour.

Coach Jowers and I would go up to the old library on campus almost every day to visit with the other faculty members and drink coffee. Almost without exception after we had gotten our coffee and sat around among the other faculty members, Coach Jowers would take over the conversation. He would just butt in and take over. He was always asked his opinion on just about everything, and he would start telling what he knew. All of them, including College President Dr. Flowers, really respected Coach and liked his views on just about everything.

After we lost my first game as Head Basketball Coach here at SWT, Coach Jowers said that it was time, the next day, for us to go up for our coffee break. I told him that I was busy filling out game reports or something and he told me to put that stuff down and get up and go with him to the library and take my music for losing. He knew that I hated to go up there after we lost but he made sure that I went.

There were many times that I went with Vernon, Bill Miller, Al Reeh and Coach up to the Faculty Lounge which was in Flowers Hall at that time. It was the only place faculty and staff could get coffee and visit with each other. We would go up there and just sit back and listen to Coach Jowers talk to the political scientists, the administrators and the other liberal arts faculty. Coach could keep up with every one of their conversations on current events and usually would dominate the discussion with intelligence.

Coach must have read all of the latest issues of *USA Today*, *US News and World Report*, *Time Magazine* and many government documents. He could keep up with the best in his knowledge of current events. I really think over all, he may have been the smartest guy I've ever known. He had just innate intelligence. In the late 50s, he was offered a scholarship to go to the University of Iowa to work toward a doctorate but he wouldn't give up coaching here to go.

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Patton*



*Bradley Moody, Reynaldo Ferias, Dr. Bobby Patton and Coach Jowers.  
(Courtesy of Dr. Bobby Patton)*

## Holes in your socks

One time, Coach Jowers and I were staying in the same room on a trip. The morning after we arrived, as we were putting on our shoes, I noticed that he had a huge hole in the toe of one of his socks. I laughed and said, "Coach, can't you afford a pair of socks?" Jowers replied, "Do you have any holes in your socks?" I answered, "No."

Jowers, "That's why you don't have any money and I do."

## Star Huffstickler.

Coach Jowers said that he should letter Star Huffstickler in 1963. As you may or may not know there are about 40 or 50 of us who would still be trying to pass English 101 if it were not for Star.

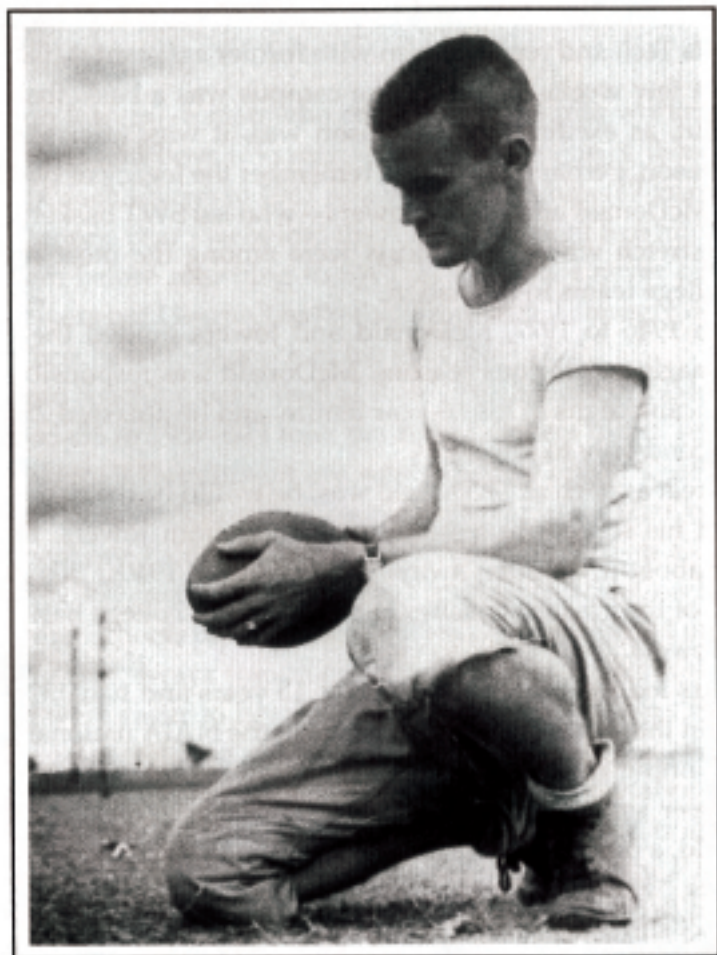
In the fall of 1960 I took English 101 (or whatever it was called) and flunked it. The next year I started taking it and dropped it. The following year I signed up but was not going to class. Someway Coach Jowers found out that I had not been to class—only three weeks had passed. In his most encouraging way, he suggested that I get the matter taken care of. He called Dr. Houston who was head of the English Department and made an appointment for me. I told Dr. Houston I needed to change classes due to the fact that the teacher and I were going to have a personality conflict. He said that the only section that was open was in Star's class. He sent me to see her to see if she would let me in her class that late in the semester. I thought of every lie in the books to tell her as to why I needed in her class. As I reached her door I decided to just tell the truth. It worked! She said that she would let me in her class if I would promise two things. 1) That I would come to class. 2) That I would try. When I got to class Harvy Boy was there. We had a good time and I made it through with a "C." The next semester there were 15 Bobcats in her class. Heffo, Lindy, and Grubbo, passed the following semester. The next year, which was the football season of '63, two milestones were reached at SWT. The Bobcats went undefeated in football but more amazing than that Billy Ham and Joe Bed passed English. So you can see why Coach Jowers wanted to letter her.

*Submitted by Jerry Cole*



Chapter 4

**IT WAS A PRIVILEGE**



## Quadrangles—From Hillviews, Summer 1994

Southwest Texas State had seen its share of hoopla that year. The men's basketball team capped a great season with a Southland Conference tournament championship and a bid to the NCAA Tournament. Then, in rapid succession, we lost our head coach, Jim Wooldridge to Louisiana Tech and replaced him with former assistant, Mike Miller.

For a few weeks in March, the campus was a basketball whirlwind. But, as exciting as this season was, it was, after all, only a single season. Perhaps we should remember the legacy of two men—Vernon McDonald and Milton Jowers—who led SWT basketball for a 31-year stretch when the Bobcats were among the most respected small college teams in the nation.

From 1946 to 1977, McDonald and Jowers guided the Bobcats to 25 amazing victorious seasons. McDonald was responsible for 12 winning campaigns in his 16-year tenure, and he amassed 226 career wins, second only to Jowers.

As great a coach as McDonald was, he would be the first to admit he owed his success to lessons he learned from Jowers. Make no mistake about it, “hidden away” at SWT in the 1940s, '50s and '60s was one of the greatest coaches in the history of college basketball—Milton Jowers.

Jowers led the basketball team for 15 years and had 13 winning seasons in that time. He made six trips to the NAIA national tournament, winning it in 1960. He won 287 games, an average of more than 19 per season and won 75 percent of the games he coached. McDonald, a player on Jowers' 1951–52 team that finished the season 30–1, says, “The greatest thing that ever happened to me was playing for and coaching under Milton Jowers.”

In 1961, Coach Jowers relinquished his duties as head basketball coach and passed the reins to McDonald, by then his able assistant. Why did he leave the SWT hardwood? It was not to retire, nor to go elsewhere for more money. For Milton Jowers, there were no greener pastures than those of San Marcos. So, when the university administration came to him and asked him to revitalize the foundering

football program, Jowers became head football coach. The football team went from 2-8 the year before Jowers took over, to 10-0 in his third and final season.

*Submitted by Mark Hendricks, Summer 1994*

## Coaching Legend

Milton Jowers—a man who changed loafers into workers, losers into winners and boys into men. I know. I was one of those boys. I first met Coach Jowers in 1947 as a young freshman (17 years old) at SWT. After one year I went into the Army and spent two hitches with Uncle Sam before returning to SWT in 1952-53. I never played for Coach Jowers but I learned basketball from him. I strongly believe he was the best basketball coach of his era.

I began coaching basketball at Kyle High School in 1954. For five years 1955-56 to 1959-60 I took the Kyle Panthers to the Texas State Boys Basketball Tournament and applied every one of Coach Jowers basketball principles in our program. One year in the state basketball tournament one half of the coaches representing schools all over the state of Texas were from SWT or had connections with Coach Jowers. At coaching schools or coaching clinics where he lectured on basketball, there was always standing room only. Those of us in the coaching field were eager to hear what he had to say—he was truly light years ahead at this time in the game.

It has been almost 50 years since he won the National NAIA Basketball Championship in 1960, but those of us “old timers” have not forgotten those things he taught us—he was truly a legend in his own time. He changed my life. I became a basketball coach and served for 24 years as the Superintendent of the Kyle schools and the Hays CISD. More importantly I believe I was a better husband, a better father, and a better man because of his leadership and drive. I thank God for Coach Jowers and the influence he had on us all.

*Submitted by Dr. “Moe” Johnson*

## A Tennis Scholarship

Only the Lord knows, for sure, how I got to SWT but here is how it seemed to me. My sophomore year at Tarleton Junior College (1950–51) I was on scholarship to play tennis and be a student athletic trainer and manager for all sports. The scholarship did not include meals. Pence Dacus lived in the same athletic dorm that I lived in but we were not close even though we were both on the tennis team. One afternoon after practice, he said, “Let’s go to the dining hall to eat.” I told him that I could not go. He kept after me until I told him about the limits of my scholarship. Pence ran a laundry pick-up and delivery service for a local laundry out of his room. He must have had some money because he insisted that he was going to buy me a meal ticket for the rest of the semester. He would not take no for an answer or I didn’t protest as much as I should have. I have not paid him back as of this date because he says I could not afford the interest anyway.

I was visiting Pence at his home in Brady during that summer when he got a call from Coach Jowers asking him to come to San Marcos for a visit. Pence had a scholarship promised from Coach Harry Stiteler at Texas A&M to play football for the 1951–52 season (I think) but the A&M coach got fired just a few weeks before Coach Jowers called. Pence was concerned about the status of this A&M scholarship and decided he should go to San Marcos and talk with Coach Jowers. Well, he could not just tell me to go home so he asked if I wanted to ride down to San Marcos with him to meet Coach Jowers. I said OK.

Coach Jowers gave Pence a full scholarship to play football and basketball. He also played tennis and ran track. I was standing beside Pence while all of this conversation was going on. Coach Jowers then asked Pence who the person standing beside him was. He introduced me to Coach Jowers and told him that I played on the tennis team with him and was the student athletic trainer and manager at Tarleton working for Coach Willie Zapalac. I do not remember being asked any questions, but if I was asked anything, I am sure I said “Yes Sir” or “No Sir.”

Coach Jowers looked to an office on his left and called out to Coach Chico Gensberg saying, "Chico, do you have any tennis scholarships left?" A voice from the office on his left said, "I think I have a half." Coach Jowers said, "I just got you a tennis player." Coach Jowers then looked to an office on his right and called out, "Coach Strahan, do you still have that ticket manager job open?"

A voice from the office on the right said, "Yes." Coach Jowers said, "I got you a new ticket manager." The ticket manager job was given to me with the understanding that I would be the student athletic trainer/manager for all sports. That is the way I remember the event. If you ask Pence, he will probably give you a completely different version. Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right person, proved to be one of the best things that ever happened to me.

*Submitted by Joe Ammerman*

## **Personal Favorites**

Coach Jowers had a reputation for being a stern and demanding coach who never made mistakes and certainly never admitted it if he did. I always knew Coach Jowers was smart but I was reminded of just how smart he was just a few weeks ago. I was visiting with some of the early 1950s SWT athletes when out of the blue one of the guys blurted out, "You and Dacus and Lackey were Jowers favorites." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well Jowers put the three of you in the only room in Bobcat Hall #2 that had a private bathroom." I thought for a minute and realized he was right. I am sure he gave us that special room because he wanted to keep Wendell Lackey and me happy. Thank you Coach Jowers.

I guess I feel more like Coach Jowers' secretary. He always treated me well. I worked for him and Coach Strahan for three years and cannot remember a time when I felt anything but privileged to be there. I was a babysitter for his first child and rode with Coach and his wife in their car to the NAIA Tournament in Kansas City in 1952. He was always pleasant with his wife and I believe he was a good husband

and father to his children. He gave me a half tennis scholarship and half “ticket manager” job to be a student athletic trainer for three years. I would not have been able to stay in school without them. I know that he was responsible for at least two of my jobs after I graduated. Working for Coach Jowers was an experience that, as I look back, changed my entire attitude about what a man can do if he is willing to work.

*Submitted by Joe Ammerman*

## **Tight-Fisted**

I know that I was always afraid to call Billy (Miller) at the gym. In fact, I wouldn’t and didn’t ever call until Coach Jowers had left the gym.

We bought the land across from Coach Jowers fairly quickly after we came back to the University. Billy knew that he would be the next head football coach barring some major problem. Therefore, we considered the land investment a wise choice. Coach Jowers stated that the land should be about paid for in five years. He had to be kidding! I’m afraid we weren’t as tight-fisted as Coach Jowers.

*Submitted by LaRue Miller*

## **Hand Stamping Tickets**

Coach Jowers came in one day and said, “Mary, I have a job for you. We have to HAND stamp all the tickets for the games at Bobcat Stadium. It may take you all summer, but will you do it for me?” I told him that I would get the job done. You see our budget did not include ordering printed tickets. I know you, Vernon, will remember the hand stamp that had to be moved from number-to-number, row-to-row, etc. I always liked to tackle a job and could not wait until it was finished. One day Coach Jowers walked in and I said I have all the tickets ready. He could not believe I had completed the job (that was going to take all summer).

He usually did this job himself and he knew what a task it was. Now, haven't we come a long way since those days? After I left the athletic department, the tickets were printed. I guess the budget got a little bigger and was not operating on a shoestring. Coach Jowers knew how to cut corners.

*Submitted by Mary Soyars Woodward*

## **Meeting with Coach**

All the male coaches had their offices in the old Strahan Gym, which is where the Music Building is currently. Our offices were not air-conditioned and they were open at the top for ventilation purposes. If you and I were talking in one office everyone in the area could hear what was said. Anytime anyone would want to ask Coach Jowers for something, we were all a little leery because we didn't know how he would react that day. Most of us would sit back and wait for somebody else to go ask him for something. Then we could tell by the tone of his voice whether or not it was going to be a good time for us to go see him. Coach Jowers probably knew it because if one person would go in his office and get a yes, then five minutes later somebody else would knock on his door. Then five minutes later somebody else would knock on his door. And if he was gruff that day, everybody would stay away, because they knew if he was in a bad mood the answer would probably be 'No'.

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Patton*

## **Batting Practice**

I was scared to death of Coach Jowers. I would cross the street in order not to meet him on the sidewalk. The only story I have is the one with Ronnie Arrow. We were getting ready for baseball season and I was hitting ground balls to Ronnie. We were playing on the grass between the two dorm wings of the gym. I tried to hit a grounder to Ronnie and it somehow went on a line drive at the windows at the top of the gym. The ball shattered one of the windows

at the top of the gym and fell into the lobby of the gym where they used to keep all of the team pictures from years' past. We heard the glass shatter and took off as fast as we could to our dorm room and closed the door behind us. We thought we made a clean getaway until Dr. Patton knocked on our door with a message from Coach Jowers. Dr. Patton told us Coach Jowers said if we wanted our baseball it was on his desk. Needless to say we could do without that baseball.

*Submitted by Morris Ogden*

## **Five Pawns and Keith**

Keith Hoffman was a really good high school athlete. I think that his best sport was football but he helped get his high school basketball team into the state tournament in Austin. He was thinking about playing football at Texas A&M until he realized that Ellen Ann, his high school girlfriend, was a freshman at SWT. That ended his desire to be an Aggie. At SWT, he started out playing football and basketball but he really was better in football where he lettered four years as a running back. He stayed out for basketball because he enjoyed it, but it wasn't his favorite collegiate sport to play.

Keith was always a pretty good friend of Coach Jowers. One day Keith was in Coach's office and saw him toying around with a piece of plywood. He asked Coach what that was and Coach informed him that it was a basketball court scaled down in size so that he could take five pawns from a chess game and move them around on this little basketball court and see what things could look like when actually on the playing floor. Coach showed Keith how it worked, and by moving the five little pawns around, showed how simple it was to see things on the board. Keith asked Coach Jowers where he (Keith) was on that court and Coach moved his pencil that he was holding over to the side of the court and drew a small rectangular box and wrote Keith's name in the box. Keith asked what that box indicated and Coach said that was the bench and that Keith was on it.

*Submitted by Dr. Keith Hoffman and Vernon McDonald*



## 47 Years Earlier

In the spring of my senior year Coach called me into his office and said, "I need to talk to you, Bobby. I want to talk to you about your future." At that time, my hopes and dreams were to be a junior high coach and to win every city championship there ever was. I had really no desire to be a high school coach ever. He took me out of his office, which surprised me because he always talked to people in his office. We sat on the curb out in front of our building. I didn't have any idea what he was going to say and I was getting scared. He said, "What are you going to do next year?" And I said, "Well I was going ask you for some help to look for a junior high job." He replied, "Well I've got other plans for you." I asked, "What do you mean?" Coach said, "Well I want you to come back here next fall and be the athletic trainer and work on your masters degree." I looked at him, just about as puzzle-faced as I could probably get. I didn't really know how to answer him.

I asked him what all that entailed and he said, "Well you're going to have to teach two or three classes, be the athletic trainer for all the athletic teams, and work on your masters degree taking at least six hours each semester." He tried to reassure me when he said, "Well now don't worry, I've got another plan. There's an athletic trainer at the University of Texas named Frank Medina that I know. You get in contact with him and he'll help you." I said, "OK." I called my mother and asked her, "Can I live on \$2,400 a year?"

I agreed to take the athletic training job. Therefore, I was really hired as an athletic trainer without ever filling out an application for the university. I never knew what the job was about until I actually began to work. One thing I learned while being around Coach Jowers was that if Coach Jowers offered you anything you should take it because it would be the right thing to do.

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Patton*

*Footnote: Dr. Bobby Patton is currently in his 47th year at Texas State University.*

## Overworked and Underpaid

Well in those days everyone, Bill, Mac, and all the other coaches, were overworked. Most coaches covered two sports and had more classes to teach compared to what coaches do now. But we all thought we were in heaven by being here. The neat thing about the group of coaches in the 1960s was we were all graduates of Southwest Texas. We all knew what Coach Jowers expected. When we went to work for him there weren't any surprises. We knew that he demanded excellence in the people who worked for him and that's what he demanded of his athletes. He expected you to try to be your best each time you did something. He didn't like it if you didn't try. If you didn't succeed, that was one thing, but if you weren't trying, he would get your attention real quick.

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Patton*

## Pay Raise

I was coaching football and basketball. I was the only scout for football every weekend. I helped coach spring training in football and basketball and taught 12 activities that met six days a week. I finally went to Coach Jowers with my wife's urging and asked him if there was a chance that I could get a raise. We were hardly making ends meet. Coach explained to me about what a privilege it was to be able to say that you were a college coach. None of my friends were college coaches and every one of them would love to have my job and be able to say they were college coaches. Coach said that I did not realize what it meant to people to know that I was a college coach and that I should be satisfied with that knowledge. I went home to face my wife and she asked me what Coach had said and I told her that all I knew was that we were so lucky to be able to say that we were college coaches. That did not go over too well with her or me, but those were the facts.

## Pay Raise II

I went to Coach Jowers and told him that we had beaten Sam Houston several times in a row. He said that he knew that. I then told him that the Sam Houston coach was making \$5,000 more than me. He said that he did not know that. I then asked him if there was a chance that I could make what the Sam Houston coach was making and he said yes. I asked him what I should do next. He told me to go apply for the Sam Houston job and that this job did not pay that much. What a let down again. I did find out later that the Sam Houston coach not only coached basketball but he was in charge of their swimming pool year-round.

## Testing Me

I started coaching basketball in Fredericksburg. One day I looked up into the stands and there was Coach Jowers. I thought, What the heck? What's going on here? And you talk about being nervous! With him sitting up in the stands, watching me coach practice I was real nervous. After practice was over, I spoke with Coach Jowers and he said, "You wanna come back to Southwest Texas and coach?"

Well, there was no doubt in my mind, if Coach Jowers says that, then I'm there. You know, that's how much I thought of the man and admired him. I said, "Yeah, I guess so." Course, I hadn't talked to Ellen Anne, my wife and we had two young boys. But there was no doubt I was coming back. So I came back and that's how my career started at Southwest Texas in 1963 as a coach and teacher. I didn't question him. Fact is I took a pay cut coming from Fredericksburg High School to here. But I did it because he said I should.

I came back and after a couple of months he said, "You know what? You're going to have to get some hours above your master's degree." "Why don't you go ahead and get a doctorate?" I got my Masters at Texas A&I and never even thought of getting a doctorate's degree. Once again because of Coach Jowers, I said OK.

It was pretty tough. Like I already said I had two young boys at the time so every summer we trucked it to North Texas with the

whole family. One spring semester I had to go up there because of residency requirements. I went up by myself but never questioned it. He said that's what I need to do and that's what I did. That's the type of man he was.

*Submitted by Dr. Keith Hoffman*

## Shoestrings

He was so demanding that things were done right. One of his close college friends was Sam Norris who ran track here in the 30s. Sam was a sporting goods salesman and worked for C & S Sporting Goods in Austin. That store became Rooster Andrews Sporting Goods.

SWT was one of the schools Sam serviced. All of our athletic gear was bought through Sam. As the athletic trainer, I was in charge of the equipment and the student managers. One year the entire order of athletic equipment came in at one time. The driver gave me the invoice and it was my job to inventory the order to see if it all arrived.

I must have spent hours inventorying the delivery. When I thought I had completed the task I went to Coach and I told him, "Coach it's all here."

And he said, "Are you sure?"

"Yes sir."

"Well, I see here that we ordered 144 shoe strings. How did they come?"

And I said, "They're all loose in a big bundle." They weren't packaged in pairs as they are now.

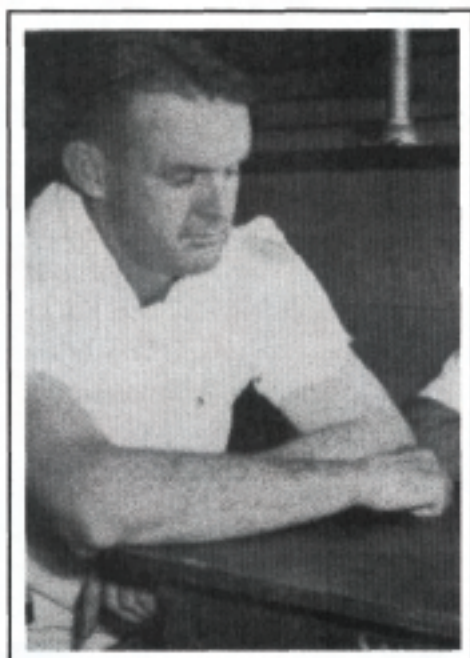
And he said, "Did you count each one of them?"

"No, I just counted it as one bundle of shoestrings."

"Go back and count 'em."

I went back and counted. We were two short and I had to go tell him that. Well, he called Sam and told him he'd cheated him out of two shoestrings and he wasn't going to pay the bill until he got those two shoestrings. Sam actually came to San Marcos and brought the two shoestrings. He gave them to me. I told Coach Jowers, "They are here now, Coach." And he said, "OK, we'll pay the bill."

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Patton*



*Milton Jowers*

## Memories

Jimmy O'Banion came to SWT in the fall of 1949. He was from Sweeny, Texas. He said that he thought a good title for "THE BOOK" would be "I survived Milton Jowers." Jimmy said that would be wrong since it would not do justice to a great man. He had a few memories of his four years at SWT and the first one was that he was elected captain of the team in 1953. He also remembered playing on the 1952 team that won 30 games and lost one in a double overtime in Kansas City. Lastly he remembered his association with a host of wonderful gentlemen.

*Submitted by Jimmy O'Banion and Vernon McDonald*

## Career Counselor

When I came to SWT as a freshman out of Seguin I had not a clue what I wanted to do in life and therefore what to major in. Indirectly, Coach Jowers helped me to decide.

When I first went to register, they asked me what I wanted to major in. My mind went to work as quickly as it could. I knew that if I went into coaching I would have to major in Physical Education. And I also knew that if I majored in Physical Ed, I would have to take a lot of courses down in the gym where Coach Jowers was. So, I told them I wanted to major in Business Administration.

And that is why I did not go into coaching! Fear! Amazing. Coach Jowers was not only a great coach but also a great career counselor.

*Submitted by Bruce Greg*

## "RINGTUMS"

When Coach Jowers returned from the service, he started a dumb game called "Ringtums." After getting your haircut, the first person you didn't want to meet was Coach Jowers. Here are the rules: Coming upon Jowers after your haircut, you had say "ringtums" before he did. When Coach Jowers said "ringtums" first, you were in serious trouble. If you failed to say the word first, Jowers would double up his fist and put his knuckles at the base of your head exactly where your new haircut started. He would mash or force his knuckles all the way to the top of your head. This really hurt. He did the job just like everyone else except he did not just stop with his knuckles, he would go all the way to his elbow shoving and pushing all the way. He just loved to do this. You very seldom caught him with a new haircut and got to say "ringtums."

*Submitted by Joe Ammerman*

Chapter 5

**END OF AN ERA**



## Cancer

One day while the athletic offices were still down near the San Marcos River in Sewell Park, Coach Jowers called all of us coaches into his small office. He made sure that all of us were there and when we all arrived, he asked us to all sit down. Well, there was not nearly enough room in his office for chairs for all his coaches so we sat or stood where we could. Coach told us that he wanted all of us to sit even if it meant sitting in a corner. We all sat. He said that he wanted to tell all of us a problem that he had to deal with and he wanted to tell all of us at one time. The next thing that he said was that he did not want anyone looking at him. He told us to look out the window or the ceiling or anywhere but not directly at him. We thought what in the world was he going to say?

He started out by saying that he had been working on a problem and did not know the answer just yet but that he was prepared to work on it with all his strength. What was he going to say? He then said that he had cancer and it was starting to spread into his lymph nodes and things did not look too good but that if it could be whipped, he would whip it. He asked us if any of us had any questions and of course no one said a word. Then he said well, get out of here! What a way to tell us his problem.

Several months later Coach was getting worse because of the cancer and he went to the M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston for an operation. When he was able to come back to San Marcos, he was told that he would never be able to raise his right arm because, as Coach said, "They took out all my rigging." They did remove all the lymph nodes in the right side of his neck, his right shoulder and on down into his right arm, which meant that they had to remove all the infected muscles in all these places. For the next several weeks, I mean several weeks; I kept hearing a pecking noise coming out of his office. My office was next to his and I hesitated in asking him what that pecking noise was. I need to tell you that when he wanted to write anything, he had to pick up his right arm with his left hand and arm and place his right arm on the desk and he could then write as well as ever. Well, one day he called me into his office and proceeded



to raise his right hand and arm by itself. I said, "How in the world did you do that?" He showed me how he had been taking his index and middle finger and had been climbing up our adjoining wall with those two fingers over and over until he had regained muscles and strength in that right arm. Unbelievable!

## **Letter of Resignation**

The hardest thing I ever did for him was when he called me from his hospital bed and asked me to take a letter and deliver it for him. He dictated his letter of resignation. He was dying and he knew he could not continue. In this letter, he named his recommendation for his replacement because he knew someone had to take over his duties immediately. The Board accepted his recommendation and named Billy Miller as Athletic Director. I continued to work for him until after 1972.

Coach Jowers had really suffered from his chemo treatments and said no one should suffer the nausea from such procedures of cancer treatments. We have more hope now, as treatments are not so severe. I will always remember when the staff found out Coach Jowers had cancer. Coach Vernon McDonald came into my office and we both cried.

*Submitted by Mary Soyars Woodward*

## **Mary Soyars Woodward's Tribute to Coach Milton Jowers**

I was Secretary to Coach Milton Jowers during the years before he found out that he had cancer and I was still his secretary during his final days. I often wondered if the men who played for Coach Jowers knew how intelligent he really was, not only as a Coach, but also in other matters involved in being Athletic Director of Southwest Texas. He knew every facet of running his office and staff. The tons of paper work were tremendous and he knew how to do it all.

A secretary gets to know her boss and Coach Jowers was one of a kind. He was a fine man, husband, and father. He was a great philosopher and had many funny stories about his coaching days. One in particular was about a game played in San Marcos. He said it was cold, rainy and very miserable. SWT had the other team down many, many points. The other coach sent word to see if they could shorten the quarters by five minutes. Coach Jowers agreed. Then the opposing team made a touchdown and he sent word back to forget the arrangement. Coach Jowers laughed, because he said they were so far ahead the other team had no way of beating them and they all suffered through the elements of weather until the game was finally finished. Coach Jowers told me about the horrors of his duty during World War II and many other words of wisdom. He was a tough mentor, but had a soft spot in his heart and his greatness cannot be equaled.

*Submitted by Mary Soyars Woodward*

## **Four Friends**

Coach Jowers had really four good friends. He had three of them, for it seems like, forever. The first was “Buck” Paine who owned the local cleaning shop, Jackson Cleaners. It was located about where the parking lot is now by Frost Bank and faced Guadalupe Street. Another friend was Barton Gil, a barber, and his barbershop was near the Jackson Cleaners. Alan Woods, a local jeweler, whose jewelry shop was across from the north side of the courthouse. Jowers, Paine, Gil and Woods were really good friends.

One time Coach Jowers took our basketball team to Kansas City for the National Tournament and as usual he did not have enough cash money. He asked these men if they had any spare money and ol’ Gil said that he always had spare money and how much did Coach need. Coach told him that he would need about \$500. Gil reached into his billfold and pulled out five \$100 bills and said there is plenty more where that came from. We were playing in the National Tournament and didn’t have enough money. Unbelievable!

Now sometime later, a country boy from Junction came back to San Marcos to work in the State Bank and Trust in San Marcos. He was a younger man by the name of Clovis Barker. He and Coach Jowers got along instantly. I think it was because he would not take anything from Coach. If Coach hit him on the shoulder or back, Clovis would do the same thing to him as soon as he could. This fourth friend really came to know and love Coach. Clovis was a pallbearer at Coach's funeral.

Shortly before Coach passed away, all of "his boys" as he called them, had a Jowers' picnic at Cape's Camp on the San Marcos River. They estimated about 500 of Jowers former athletes were there. Coach didn't show up and everyone was worried. Buck and Clovis left and drove out to get him. They found him in bed and not wanting to come to the picnic. He told them that he was too weak. Clovis teased him about being a sissy, which fired Coach up. They helped him get out of bed and dressed, and then carried him out to the car.

Arriving at the picnic, Coach Jowers was greeted by a standing ovation from "his boys." Once again, being amongst his friends and players, Coach started acting like a new man. There was a hurried meal and a few words from his favorite preacher, Paul Powell, and then Coach Jowers got up slowly and quietly thanked everyone for coming. He reminded them that the Bobcats had a tough football game that night and they needed to support the team. He continued to make a few short remarks and then reminded them that "I never chewed out one of my players that I did not love." You could have heard a pin drop when he said that. And then added, "Now don't get me wrong, the more I chewed a player out didn't mean the more I loved him!" Everyone jumped to their feet and gave him another standing ovation.

In thinking about this man, I believe he was probably one of the great, if not the greatest, coaches ever, and in any sport. He had the ability to get the maximum out of his players either from fear, respect or whatever to prove to him that they could do it. He could do that with each and every player. He seemed to always know what to do and then did it.

## NAIA Watch

The NAIA gave coaches and players watches when they won the national basketball championship. Coach Jowers lost his when he was plowing one day at his farm. The NAIA arranged for Coach to get another copy of that watch. It was given to him at a special gathering of “his boys” when we met at Cape’s Camp just before he passed away. I guess he was wearing that ‘till he died. I don’t know if the watch was buried with him or if it was given to his family.

*Submitted by Dr. Bobby Patton*

## Thought I was Dying?

Shortly after Jowers Day, the phone rang in the gym and I answered it. It was Mrs. Jowers and she sort of yelled into the phone and said “Get Keith (Hoffman one of our coaches) and hurry out here. Milton is dying.” I found Keith and we hurriedly drove out to the Blanco River and their home and there was Coach gagging on his own blood and lying in his bed. Mrs. Jowers asked us to please turn him on his side so that he would not choke. Keith and I rolled him over to the side of the bed and he started doing better and he got rid of the blood that was in his mouth and throat. In just a minute or two he rolled back over on his back and looked at us and with a small smile on his face said, “Thought I was dying, didn’t you?” Still with a sense of humor at a time like this. That was my Coach.

## See You Later Alligators

On the last trip that Coach Jowers took to M.D. Anderson, I believe three of us took him in an ambulance from Pennington’s. After getting him into the hospital, we got ready to leave; the last words he ever said to us were “See you later alligators.”

Yep, real upbeat and everything, but those are the last words I ever heard him say.

*Submitted by Dr. Keith Hoffman*

## What Can I Do for You?

Coach Jowers had cancer everywhere in his body before his death in 1972. The Bobcat basketball team had played two games so far during this season and lost both of them. After the second game, I got in my car and drove to M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston, just to see Coach. I walked up to his door and Mrs. Jowers was sitting there and she told me to go on in. Well, Coach looked awful. I said, "Hello Coach, how are you doing?" He replied, "It's not me that I am worried about, I am worried about you because you are 0 and 2." That was Coach Jowers.

Just a few days after this trip to the hospital, we were playing in a basketball tournament in San Antonio and in their old Hemisphere Arena. We were in the finals and were having a team meeting about mid-afternoon. The phone rang and it was Mrs. Jowers. She told me that Coach had passed away. I told her that I was coming back to San Marcos immediately. She told me that I was not and that Milton would expect us to win. I almost choked telling my team about this. But we did play and I think probably played maybe the best game any team of mine ever played. We won by 19 points in the championship game.

## His Legacy

Milton Jowers' "Boys" graduated and went on to be successful: Physicians, presidents and vice-presidents of banking institutions, major college coaches in basketball and football, PhDs, airline pilots, business owners, professional basketball coaches in the NBA, seaplane pilot and owner, athletic directors, high school coaches, judges, pharmaceutical supplier, college professors, vice-president of colleges and universities, insurance CEOs, school superintendents, investment bankers, provosts at major institutions, professional athletes in the NFL and NBA, a coach who won over 1,000 games and was "Coach of the Year" five times in basketball, and last but not least — an author.

These athletes continue to support and love their coach, Milton Jowers, and their alma mater Southwest Texas State University.



*(Courtesy of Jimmy Jowers)*

## **RECORDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**



### **Coach Jowers Awards and Accomplishments**

As a basketball coach at Teague, Shiner and San Marcos high schools, his teams won 223 and lost 20 and one of his San Marcos squads won a state championship.

As a high school football coach at San Marcos,  
his teams went 29-3-1.

While coaching at Southwest Texas his record was  
287 wins and 105 losses.

He won or tied for the Lone Star Conference Championship  
eight times.

He took the Bobcats to the National Tournament six times.

1960 NAIA Coach of the Year

1960 Coached the NAIA All-Stars that defeated Ohio State,  
(the NCAA champion that year).

Lone Star Coach of the Year 1960

Lone Star Coach of the Year 1962

Inducted into the Helms Hall of Fame for  
Athletic Achievement 1963

Elected NAIA Hall of Fame 1963

Elected South Texas Hall of Fame 1963

Elected Texas Association of Basketball Coaches 1964

Texas State "T" Association Hall of Honor 1977

Texas State Distinguished Alumni 1972

Lone Star Conference 75th Anniversary Basketball Coach

## Coach Milton Jowers SWT Records

### Men's Basketball Championships

#### NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (1)

1960	NAIA 29-4 29-4	Milton Jowers, Head Coach
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#### CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS (11)

1950	Lone Star Conference 13-10 (9-6)	Milton Jowers, Head Coach
1951	Lone Star Conference 21-5 (7-1)	Milton Jowers, Head Coach
1952	Lone Star Conference 30-1 (11-0)	Milton Jowers, Head Coach
1955	Lone Star Conference 20-5 (9-3)	Milton Jowers, Head Coach
1959	Lone Star Conference 27-6 (13-1)	Milton Jowers, Head Coach
1960	Lone Star Conference 29-4 (13-1)	Milton Jowers, Head Coach
1974	Lone Star Conference 19-12 (12-6)	Vernon McDonald, Head Coach

*Courtesy of Texas State University Athletic Department*

*<http://txstatebobcats.cstv.com/sports/m-baskbl/archive/092404aaa.html>*



## Coach Milton Jowers SWT Records

### Football Championships

1951	Milton Jowers	6-3-1	2-2-1	Lone Star (NAIA)
1952	Milton Jowers	7-2	4-1	Lone Star (NAIA)
1953	Milton Jowers	5-4	3-2	Lone Star (NAIA)
1954	R.W. Parker	6-3-1	5-0-1	Lone Star (NAIA) LSC Co-Champions
1955	R.W. Parker	6-1-2	5-1	Lone Star (NAIA) LSC Co-Champions
1956	R.W. Parker	6-3	4-2	Lone Star (NAIA)
1957	R.W. Parker	4-6	3-4	Lone Star (NAIA)
1958	R.W. Parker	5-5	3-4	Lone Star (NAIA)
1959	R.W. Parker	4-6	2-5	Lone Star (NAIA)
1960	Jack Henry	2-8	3-3-1	Lone Star (NAIA)
1961	Milton Jowers	4-5-1	3-3-1	Lone Star (NAIA)
1962	Milton Jowers	8-2	6-1	Lone Star (NAIA)
1963	Milton Jowers	10-0	6-0	Lone Star (NAIA) LSC Champions
1964	M. Jowers / B. Miller	8-2	4-2	Lone Star (NAIA)

*Courtesy of Texas State University Athletic Department*

*<http://txstatebobcats.cstv.com/sports/m-baskbl/archive/092404aaa.html>*

## **"T" Association**

### **Milton Jowers**

**Sport: Basketball/Football**

**Years Coached: 1939–1960**

**Hall of Honor Induction: 1977**

Milton Jowers is Texas State University's legendary basketball and football coach. Now a huge athletic edifice bears his name and he was the first person enshrined in the Society of Champions of Texas State University by winning a national championship in basketball. Jowers is deserving of every honor Texas State University has bestowed upon him.

Jowers received his undergraduate degree from Southwest Texas State University in 1935 and later received his master's in 1939. While attending school at SWT, Jowers was a member of the National Honor Society, Alpha Chi and Pi Gamma Mu Honor Society.

From 1935 to 1942, Jowers taught and coached at Teague High School, Shiner High School, and San Marcos High School. His teaching and coaching duties diminished in 1942, when he joined the United States Navy.

Milton Warren Jowers was discharged as a Commander in April of 1946, having spent four months of his time as a gunnery instructor at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. Over 40 months of Jowers time in the United States Navy was spent overseas.

After his time in the service, Jowers returned to SWT and started coaching again. For the next 18 years, he coached football and basketball along with teaching physical education.

On the court, Jowers helped lead his team to Lone Star Conference championships in 1950, 51, 52, 55, 59, and 60. In recognition of his accomplishments, Jowers was selected as the National Coach of the Year in 1960 and coached the NAIA All-Star team at the Olympic trials in Denver, Colorado.

On the football field, Jowers was selected as the Lone Star Conference Coach of the Year in 1960 and 1962, while guiding his teams to NAIA District Championships in 1951, 52, 57, 59, 60 and 61.

In 1963, in appreciation of his athletic achievements, Jowers was inducted into the Helms Hall of Fame as a permanent member. From 1959–1970, Jowers was Southwest Texas State's Director of Athletics and Chairman of the Department of Health and Physical Education for men. In 1970 he became the Departmental Supervisor for student teachers.

Today, because of his overwhelming dedication to Bobcat athletics, the building that houses the Department of Health and Physical Education is named after him.

*Courtesy of Texas State University Athletic Department*

*<http://txstatebobcats.cstv.com/sports/m-baskbl/archive/092404aaa.html>*

## **Milton Jowers... Strategy Is His Trademark**

Hillviews October 1962

*Reprinted with permission from Texas State University.*

Twenty-eight years of successful coaching and an enviable college basketball coaching record of 285 wins and 105 losses has earned for Southwest Texas State Coach Milton Jowers the distinction of being named to the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame.

As recipient of the award, the highest such honor given by the NAIA, Jowers is recognized nationally in the world of sports for his contributions to basketball and the coaching profession. He is the second SWT coach to be named to the honorary group. Oscar Strahan, now retired, was named to the Hall of Fame as a Track Coach in 1954.

To everyone who knows the sometimes harsh speaking Jowers, the new honor is considered well deserved and in the opinion of many "long overdue." At any rate, the honor is appropriate for a man who has always set his sights at the top of the mountain.

Even though the recent and distinguished honor came to the hard-driving coach for his contribution to basketball, his coaching record in football speaks almost as forcibly.

The brilliant coaching career of Jowers, who has held only four coaching jobs in 28 years, began in 1935 in Teague. The then young coach had just graduated from SWT where he had lettered in basketball and football, as well as being selected as all-conference player in both sports. He was named to the all-conference teams twice in basketball and once in football.

In his first coaching assignment, in the days of dirt courts and playing games in a borrowed gym, Jowers posted a 17-5 record in basketball.

Staying only one year at Teague, Jowers moved on to Shiner as principal of the high school and head basketball coach. He was also line coach for the football team.

Although the young coach posted an impressive won-lost basketball record of 108-7 in three years at Shiner, he never got past the regional tournament, always held at his alma mater in San Marcos. He recalls that at that time all high schools were in the same class, "and we always got beat by one of the big San Antonio schools."

Even though they might have been outclassed, the teams of the little country coach were always hard to beat. In his last year at Shiner he brought his team to the regional tournament at SWT with a win streak of 40 games. "One of those big schools" (Sidney Lanier of San Antonio) beat Jowers' team in sudden death overtime and advanced to the state finals.

Strahan, who was at the time athletic director at SWT and who later hired Jowers as basketball coach, took early notice of the techniques of the scrappy coach. Strahan recently said, "I think he got into the game of basketball and figured out some things that paid off. In the days before basketball teams tried to do anything other than run and shoot, Milton was figuring out offensive and defensive strategy."

"A Jowers' team had a personality," Strahan recalled. "He put a stamp on them and they had a Jowers rhythm. I could pick one of his teams anywhere." He said.

This same tough basketball strategy and hard-nosed coaching tactics of the farm boy from Caldwell County were soon to capture the elusive state basketball championship.

In the fall of 1939 Jowers took over the reins of football, basketball and track at San Marcos High School. Here, Jowers, who was rapidly making himself known, wrote three successful seasons, in both football and basketball, onto the record books of the San Marcos school.

In his freshman year at San Marcos, just five years after he started coaching, still facing the stiff competition of all high schools being in the same class, Jowers won the state basketball championship with a team that had an outstanding record of 45 wins and one loss.

In three years at San Marcos, Jowers compiled an impressive 98-8 record. His coaching record in football during the same time was equally impressive with a 29-3-1 record.

In 1942 the career of the winning coach was interrupted for a four-year stint in the U.S. Navy. After entering the Navy as an apprentice seaman, Jowers applied for the Naval ROTC program and became a "90 day Wonder." He advanced to the rank of Lt. Commander before being released.

Meanwhile, Strahan was in need of a basketball coach at SWT and asked Jowers to return to his alma mater as head basketball coach and football line coach. "In fact," Jowers says, "Coach Strahan hired me while I was still in Japan."

As to why he chose Jowers for the job, Strahan says, "I had been watching Milton for some time. I coached him in football and also saw him in basketball and track. In addition, he had as fine a record as any coach around."

Taking on his new job in February 1946, college coaching gave the basketball wizard some new marks to shoot at in the Lone Star Conference Championships and the NAIA Small College National Basketball Championship. The LSC titles were a little easier to come by than the national championship.

During Jowers' 15 years as head coach, SWT basketball teams tied or won the LSC title out-right six times — 1950, 1951, 1952, 1955, 1959, and 1960. At the same time it took four trips to the big tournament in Kansas City before Jowers could bring home the national title in 1960.

In 1952 and 1959 the Bobcats were knocked out of the national running in the semifinals; and on both occasions the winning teams went on to win the title. In 1960, however, determination and the experience of an already successful career paid off in handsome dividends as Jowers' Bobcats put down five teams to win the NAIA Championship. With no team coming closer to them than eight points, SWT steamrolled over their semifinal opponent by 38 points and blasted Westminster, Pennsylvania, 66-44 for the championship.

Following the tournament, Jowers was recognized as "Coach of the Year" for his contributions to coaching and basketball. In addition he was given the honor of coaching NAIA Olympic All-Star basketball team in the Olympic trials in Denver, Colorado.

The NAIA team slipped up on NCAA University champion Ohio State University in the first round by clubbing the Buckeyes, 76-69. However, the second and third rounds were not quite as successful for the NAIA team as they lost to the Peoria Caterpillars and the Akron National Industrial Basketball champs to wind up in fourth spot among eight teams.

The personable Jowers' coaching ability is not limited to basketball. He possesses the rare talent of being able to coach either football or basketball with equal success. During the years 1951-54 the veteran mentor had the sizeable task of being head coach in both basketball and football at SWT. Conversation with the rugged Jowers indicates that coaching two major sports is no easy task, either physically or mentally.

"During those years that I was coaching both basketball and football, I practiced basketball at night during the overlap of the two sports." Jowers reminisced.

"Many a time I have finished football practice and not even gone home before an evening basketball game. I would just lie down and rest awhile and then go up onto the floor as the game started."

Jowers now admits that after winning the national basketball title he was ready to get out of basketball. "I had climbed the mountain and there was nothing to do but climb it again," he said. "Basketball is too exacting," the veteran of more than 600 games, growled. "During the last five or six years of basketball, I had 30 or 31 games a year. I was getting too old for that kind of thing."

However, after quitting basketball, the seasoned coach must have forgotten he was feeling old, for in 1961 he was persuaded to take up the reins of the faltering SWT football team that had won only two games in 1960. He inherited a team that was predicted to go nowhere and molded out of it the toughest defensive squad in the LSC as well as winning four of ten games with one tie.

Last year, after leading the LSC race all season, the SWT Texans lost to Texas A&I in the final game of the season and finished second in the conference. The 1963 Bobcats are heavy favorites to dominate this year's league football.

While the won-lost record of Jowers speaks quite well for his success, his coaching philosophy is much deeper than winning games. Yet his philosophy is quite simple. The thick-skinned and hard-boiled coach, who seems to have an uncanny sense of just how far to drive a player to get the best out of him says, "I want those boys who play for me to know that it is a privilege to work for what you want and it does not come easy."

"In my relations as a coach with a boy, I want him to feel that I will treat him fairly. This doesn't mean that I will be easy on him. I had rather he respect me as a man and as a coach rather than to like me personally, although I would hope that I could get that same respect and be liked."

The master psychologist-coach continued, "You can have a real influence on boys in the manner in which you help them to meet the problems of the next 40-50 years. This is a real job because you have only four short years in which to do it."

Those who know Jowers best do not think the old warhorse is through winning recognition for himself and SWT. In fact there are those around who would wager you and give you the odds that they might one day hang a national football championship alongside the banner that reads "NAIA Basketball Champions 1960." After all it's not such a bad idea. It's about the only thing left for him to do.



# About Milton Jowers

By Dan Cook, Executive Sports Editor

San Antonio Express News

December 1972

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"He was a hard-nosed, red-faced SOB but Lord, how we all loved him."

That's the way one of his old players described Milton Jowers Saturday after cancer claimed the one-time Southwest Texas coach. He might have been speaking for many hundreds of men who played for the tough old gentleman. Jowers, without a doubt, was one of the greatest coaches in Texas history and he faced death just as he faced life, head-on, eyeball-to-eyeball with full knowledge.

More than a month ago Milton knew his chances were slim to even make it to Christmas. But just a few weeks ago he attended a press conference for the Alamo basketball classic here. As athletic director for Southwest Texas, he was on the job to the very last. He looked a little drawn and his face was a shade redder than usual but Milton carried a thin, confident smile on his lips as he shook hands and visited old friends. Those with him later explained that his energy and strength were gone but he gutted it out for the hour-long session. Then he slumped into a car for the ride back to San Marcos.

Mr. Jowers was one of the very few coaches who could apply strict discipline at all times and still wind up with the reputation of a fair man.

Oh, there must be some somewhere who didn't care for him and feel that he didn't give them a fair shake. He coached far too long not to have encountered at least a share of that type. But it might be safe to say that most of those didn't play long on a Jowers team, for one reason or another.

A few months ago Milton said, "I had rather a player respect me as a man and a coach than like me personally, although I would hope that I could get that same respect and be liked. Like most everything

else he attempted, Jowers realized that hope long ago. Like him? Lord, they loved him. They loved him as a man, as a coach, as a warm, wise individual who never quit caring about the men who played for him.

Tough? You bet your sweet rolls he was tough. He wasn't all holler and growl either. Milton was cut from the same mold as Lombardi. He made great demands of his players and he expected total obedience but somewhere along the way a bond of love, stemming from deep respect, was always formed. They became better players and better men for having served under such an exceptional coach.

## **Double Duty Coach**

Those of you fairly new in the area and unfamiliar with Jowers' Southwest Texas teams might be tempted to take lightly that statement about "one of the best coaches in Texas history."

Cold figures and statistics shouldn't be necessary to describe a person like Milton. But just for any doubters, it might be well to scan the coaching accomplishments of this man who died at 58.

As a high school basketball coach, Teague, Shiner and San Marcos, his teams won 223 and lost 20 and one of his San Marcos squads won a state championship. As a high school football coach at San Marcos, his teams went 29-3-1.

As a college basketball coach, at SWT, his record shows 287-105 and that includes four Lone Star titles, two co-championships and a national (NAIA) crown in 1960. His SWT football teams compiled a record of 48-18-2 with an undefeated mark in 1963.

You see, Milton had a knack of getting the most from his players, regardless of whether it was football or basketball. If the truth were known, he wasn't an expert on football and he preferred basketball coaching.

He was, however, a great expert at turning boys into men and that's really what these games are about.

Milton Jowers did not become a legend in his own time. But he'll be remembered in the area long after some legends are forgotten.

*San Antonio Express News – 12/1972*

## APPENDIX



### Donors

The following individuals donated money toward the editing, graphic design and printing of *Playing for a Winner: Remember Coach Milton Jowers*. I want to thank them for their help in getting this book published.

Karen Chisum  
(*the first of our many donors*)

Joe Ammerman  
Harper Augsburger

Hugh Berry  
Bookey Brymer

Leo Chafin  
Don Clark

Jerry Cole

Pence Dacus

Rudy Davalos

Dale Ethridge

Lewis Gilcrease

Bruce Gregg

Bob Henson

Keith Hoffman

Darrell Hortness

Earl Lankford

Lloyd Little

Howard Lockhart

Ellen (Jowers) Lund

Vernon McDonald

Bill Miller  
(by wife LaRue)

Frank Miller

Jim O'Banion

Morris Ogden

Joe Peery

Bill Pennington

Jesse Perkins

Bobby Roberts  
(by wife Patricia)

Donny Schmeltekopf

John Schott

Melford Turner

Joddie Witte

Mary Woodward

Jack Worthington  
(by wife Evelyn)

Johnny Weder

## Contributors

The following individuals contributed stories, pictures and time in preparing this book. I wish to thank them for all the memories of Coach Jowers.

Joe Ammerman	Bill Krueger
Harper Augsburger	Earl Lankford
Bill Barber	Lloyd Little
Clovis Barker	Howard Lockhart
Bookey Brymer	Ellen (Jowers) Lund
Leo Chafin	Vernon McDonald
Don Clark	Frank Miller
Jerry Cole	LaRue Miller
Pence Dacus	Reese Morrison
Terry Darden	Jimmy O'Banion
Rudy Davalos	Morris Ogden
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Mark Hendricks	Ruby Sanders
Debbie Heinsohn	Donny Schmeltekopf
Bob Henson	Lanny Vlasak
Keith Hoffman	Joddie Witte
Darrell Hortness	Mary Woodward
Moe Johnson	Alvin (PeeWee) Woods
Jimmy Jowers	Evelyn Worthington
Bobby Kinser	Pam Wuestenberg

## Mentioned in *Playing for a Winner:* *Remembering Coach Milton Jowers*

The following individuals are mentioned in a story, shown in a picture, or remembered by one of their teammates in the book. I wish to thank them for their generosity of spirit in allowing the use of their names.

Allert, Buzzy	Crisp, Glen	Hardnett, Charles
Arrow, Ronny	Dacus, Pence	Havlicek, John
Auerbach, Red	Davalos, Rudy	Heffernan, James
Augsburger, Harper	Davis, Buddy	Henry, Jack
Avila, Celestino	Dickey, Wallace	Henson, Bob
Banks, Bill	Dugger, Phil	Hoffman, Keith
Barber, Bill	Ethridge, Dale	Hortness, Darrell
Beaty, Bob	Evans, Dorothy	Howe, Art
Beaty, Zelmo	Farias, Reynaldo	Howell, Eddie
Bednarski, Joe	Forester, Don	Jacobs, Kenneth
Berry, Hugh	Franke, Gibbs	Jay, Harold
Bettis, Cedric	Frankie, Johnny	Jircik, Jimy
Billings, Herb	Frieling, Fred	Johanson, Dale
Black, Larry	Gensberg, (Chico)	Johnson, Lyndon
Bolin, C.E.	Frank	Jowers, Erma (Foster)
Brymer, Bookey	Gilcrease, Lewis	(Jowers) Lund, Ellen
Carlisle, George	Gill, Barton	Jowers, Jimmy
Chafin, Leo	Gillis, Buster	Key, Wade
Chisum, Karen	Gregg, Bruce	Knight, Bobby
Cole, Joe	Gulledge, Joe	Krueger, Bill
Cook, Chet	Haley, Jim	Lackey, Wendell
Craig, Butch	Hall, Charlie	

*Continued on next page*

**Mentioned in *Playing for a Winner: Remembering Coach Milton Jowers***  
*Continued*

Lankford, Earl	Nelson, Corky	Smith, Catfish
LaTouf, Larry	Nortman, Jerome	Stephens, John O.
Lehnoff, Fritz	O'Banion, Billy	Strahan, O. W.
Leinneweber, Danny	O'Banion, Jimmy	Supple, Jerome
Lenox, Dwayne	Ogden, Morris	Sutton, Joe
LeVrier, Bobby	Overall, Bill	Swindler, E.J.
Little, Lloyd	Parker, R.W.	Talley, Les
Lockhart, Howard	Payne, "Buck"	Tampke, Robert A
Loeffle, Ken	Peery, Joe (Lefty)	Trcka, Charles
Lucas, Jerry	Porter, Nathan	Turner, Rex
Mayhew, Dewey	Powell, Paul	Vlasak, Lanny
McDonald, Dolores	Pratka, David	Vest, George
McDonald, Donny	Prewitt, James	Vincent, Duane
McDonald, Lynn	Reece, John	Webb, Stewart
McDoniel, Billy	Reeh, Al	Weder, Johnny
McDowell, Jewell	Ross, David	Weidner, Leroy
Merriweather, Porter	Rutherford, Dave	White, Dee
Metcalf, Shellby	Sanderlin, Jerry	Whiteley, Ed
Milford, Tom	Sanders, Caddo	Whitis, Glen
Miller, Billy	Scheib, Dr.	Wilkening, Boonie
Miller, Frank	Schmeltekopf, Donny	Williams, "Spanky"
Mitchell, Cliff	Segler, Dave	Winn, Vance
Mitte, Roy	Shands, Pete	Witte, Joddie
Mohel, Jan	Sharp, Charles	Woods, (PeeWee)
Morrison, David	Simmonds, Louis	Woods, Alan
Morrison, Reese	Slaughter, Dave	
Mullens, Gary		

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# Playing for a Winner

## *Remembering* Coach Milton Jowers

The thick-skinned and hard-boiled coach, who seemed to have an uncanny sense of just how far to drive a player to get the best out of him said, "I want those boys who play for me to know that it is a privilege to work for what you want and it does not come easy."

"In my relations as a coach with a boy, I want him to feel that I will treat him fairly. This doesn't mean that I will be easy on him. I had rather he respect me as a man and as a coach rather than to like me personally, although I would hope that I could get that same respect and be liked."

The master psychologist-coach continued, "You can have a real influence on boys in the manner in which you help them to meet the problems of the next 40-50 years. This is a real job because you have only four short years in which to do it."

*Hillviews 1962*

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

"I cherish this and other memories of my dad. For Jimmy and me this book is a great gift, a way of reaching back and touching him, even though he has been gone for many years. Thank you Coach McDonald, Mrs. McDonald, and all of you who shared your memories and your resources to make this book a reality."

*Ellen Jowers Lund*