

Jack Hays

Hays is the winningest coach in Columbia football history. In 11 years with the Roughnecks, he finished with 81 wins, 37 losses and eight ties.

Hays coached 18 total years, seven with El Campo, and compiled an overall 130-60-8 record as field general. In all, he has seven district titles, 15 playoff appearances and two trips to the state title game. He has received many honors from the Texas High School Coaches Association and was inducted into its Hall of Honor in 1981.

Hays to enter hall of honor

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WEST COLUMBIA — For 18 years, Jack Raymond Hays Sr. roamed the football sidelines, spending 11 with the Columbia Roughnecks.

Today, he will be inducted into the Greater Houston Football Coaches Association Hall of Honor.

“Any time you are awarded or honored by members of your peers, it is always a great honor,” Hays said. “They chose me to be among some other great people already in it, including L.Z. Bryan.”

Between 1969-81, Hays helped establish the Roughnecks as one of the premier teams in Class 3A and posted an 81-37-5 record at the school.

In his first year at Columbia, Hays helped lead the Roughnecks to their only state final, losing to Brownwood, 34-16, in the championship game.

“It was a challenge at times, but my philosophy was about the young men we had and trying to mold them into a team and better citizens and people,” Hays said. “We hoped they would work hard for the team, and in the end their hard work would come out successfully.”

To date, Hays is the most successful coach in Roughneck history on the gridiron.

Hays also led the 'Necks to five district championships. Before arriving at West Columbia, Hays served seven years as the head man for the El Campo Ricebirds, where he posted a 49-23-3 record. In 1967, he led the Ricebirds to their only state championship final, losing to Brownwood, 36-12, in the Class 3A title game.

Hays compiled a 130-60-8 career record making 15 playoff appearances with the Roughnecks and Ricebirds, and led his teams to seven district titles.

“The game of football never has changed because when you see the draft picks, you still see teams going for players who can run, block and tackle,” Hays said from his home at Columbia Lakes. “What has changed is the way they play the game. Today’s game is more about passing, and that wasn’t our primary way of scoring touchdowns or moving the chains. We were lucky if we threw the ball seven times, but the passing game did win us some games at times.”

Born in Prosper, Hays attended Dallas Sunset High School and quarterbacked the team to the 1950 state championship game. Sunset defeated Houston Reagan, 14-6, in that contest.

After getting a scholarship from North Texas State, Hays had coaching stints at Grapevine and South Oak Cliff before heading south to coach at El Campo, where he led the Ricebirds from 1962 to 1968.

After arriving in Roughneck country, Hays prospered in his most successful stint as a head coach.

“I have many great memories when I was at Columbia, and one of them was when we beat Brazosport, 7-3, in the Astrodome,” Hays said. “It was fourth down and we made a pass to Carl Williams that got us in the end zone in front of 15,000 people. Joe Means, who just passed away, was the head coach for them at the time. Of course, going to the state finals was just an outstanding time for everyone as well.”

In 1981, Hays was inducted into the Texas High School Coaches Association Hall of Honor. In 1974, along with his coaching staff, Hays coached the South team to a win against the North in the THSCA all-star game in the Astrodome.

In 1971, Hays was elected to the THSCA board of directors and in 1975 became the president of the organization.

“We were surrounded by sports and focused-driven people,” said son Jack Hays Jr., who played for his father at Columbia. “But he still took the time to spend a lot of time with us. We knew what it was all about and at times had extended families with the coaches and players.”

After leaving the coaching profession, Jack Hays Sr. established the Hays Insurance Agency with his wife, Ellen, in West Columbia.

Hays Sr. talked about his speech he is to give at tonight’s induction.

“In my 75 years, I’ve seen a lot in my life and most of the things that have happened to me have been good and bad,” he said. “But 90 percent of the support that I’ve had has come from my family. My three kids and my wife, who held everything together while I was out chasing a football, I will be talking about them primarily along with the mentors that laid the groundwork for me to be here today.”

Induction festivities will start at 6 p.m. at the Athletic Alumni Center at the University of Houston, located at 3100 Cullen Blvd.

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Jack Hays selected for Houston Hall of Honor

The Greater Houston Football Coaches Association has selected former Columbia High School Coach Jack Hays for its Ronnie Bell Hall of Honor Award.

This award recognizes outstanding contributions to the game of high school football in the greater Houston area.

The awards ceremony will be May 6 at 7 p.m. at the Great Hall in the Athletic Alumni Center on the University of Houston campus.

Hays, his wife and three children (Jackie, Jenna and Jeff) came to West Columbia in 1969 from El Campo, where he had coached for seven years.

Over 18 years, Coach Hays' head coaching record was 130 wins, 60 losses, and 8 ties. His record at Columbia was 81-37-5.

He led his teams to



JACK HAYS

seven district championships – two at El Campo, five at CHS; 15 playoff games, and two state finalists, one each at El Campo and CHS.

Twice, he was named Brazoria County Coach of the year.

Coach Hays holds every major honor the Texas High School Coaches Association can

bestow. In 1971, he was elected to the Board of Directors. In 1974, Coach Hays and some of his staff – Charlie Forehand, Ed Derrich, and Charlie Brand – were selected to coach the South team at their annual All Star game, defeating the North team in the Astrodome.

In 1975, he was elected President, and in 1981, he received the Association's ultimate honor with his induction into the Texas High School Coaches

Association's Hall of Honor. After leaving coaching, Coach Hays remained in West Columbia, starting a successful insurance agency, and remaining active in business, his Church and in Rotary.

He was inducted last year into the Columbia High School Athletic Hall of Honor.

Former Columbia coaches recall past playoff runs

Remembering the past
HOLLY PARKER/The Facts



Former Columbia Roughneck coaches Jack Hays, left, and Charlie Brand, coached the 1969 state finalist team.

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By JOEL LUNA | 0 comments

WEST COLUMBIA - As the Columbia Roughnecks prepare for Chapel Hill in the Division II state semifinals, former Roughneck football coaches Jack Hays and Charlie Brand remember a time when they were facing the same circumstances.

Hays was the head coach of the 1969 state finalists that lost to Brownwood that year, 34-16. But he remembers how crazy it got leading up to those final two games.

"Most of that is kind of a fog to me - but I do remember that during that time one of our main focuses was to make sure and do our regular work every day and try to keep the kids on a level playing field," Hays said. "With all of the crazy stuff going on around you, and I know coach (Leland) Surovik is going through this, he has to make sure and screen all of that out, because his main job is to keep the players and coaches on an even keel."

It was Hays' first year at the helm of the Roughnecks, and he remained until 1980, when he retired to the insurance business.

"The semifinals in football is quite a lofty goal," Hays said. "Not many teams get there, and there really isn't much to analyze at this point. These kids are 13-1 and are getting ready to play game No. 15, that makes for a long season, but there are only four teams left in the state.

"Now I know they survived last week and played a good game, but this week they cannot afford to let a team back into the ball game," he continued. "With only four teams left, they will take advantage of stuff like that.

Preparation will be no different for this team this week, but just keeping the players on a certain level, that is the challenge."

Back in 1969, the Columbia coaching staff consisted of Hays, Brand, who was the defensive coordinator, and offensive coordinator Charlie Forehand.

Brand still recalls some of those fond moments.

"It was amazing, but it is hard to describe because you have to live it to understand it," he said. "Each player dreams of making it this far and to the final game. It was such a thrill for us because we played in large stadiums, like with Belton our semifinal was at Texas A&M, and the final we played at Baylor University. Of course there were a lot of write-ups, but one of the more interesting things that I saw happening was seeing the community and schools coming together. Now that was neat to see."

Brand coached for 40 years at Columbia High School starting in 1958. Sometime during the 1960s he joined the varsity level as he coached under five head coaches: ES Golston, Tex Kasen, Carmen Bonner, Hays and Ed Derrich.

"These kids just need to make sure they don't get overconfident, especially now when everyone is bragging about them," Brand said. "Everybody is telling them how good they are, but some way, you as a coach have to control that kind of stuff. There are some kids who handle praise well, and back then we didn't have that much trouble because we had some competitors.

"Now these kids here it seems like they play well together and boy do they have some quickness," he added. "They don't seem to get too overconfident, and from the start of the year, they've beaten some pretty good teams."

Columbia and Chapel Hill will meet at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Berry Center Stadium in Cypress. Hays will make the trek Friday and will be one of the guest speakers at today's 7 p.m. pep rally at Griggs Field.

"You know the athletes are a little different today, but football is still football," Hays said.

The winner of this game moves on to face either Alvarado or Henderson in the state final.

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