

Charlie Brand

Brand graduated in 1953 as a Roughneck, finishing his high school career as a five-sport letterman. He and his tennis partner won district all four years he played, competing at the state meet each year and reaching the quarterfinals.

He also was a 1952 all-district football performer.

As a tennis coach, Brand produced five state champions, including Bob Farmer, 1962; Van Manning, 1976; Joe Langner, 1978; Clark Woodson, 1985; and Kelly Hay, 1991. In 29 years of coaching tennis, Brand sent at least one player to the state meet each year. He finished with three fall team tennis titles and in the spring had four girls' titles and one boys' title.

In 2004, the Columbia-Brazoria ISD dedicated the Charlie Brand Tennis Complex in his honor. That same year, he was nominated to the Texas Tennis Hall of Fame.

As a football coach for 32 years, Brand helped the 1969 Roughnecks reach the state finals in Class 3A, losing to Brownwood, 34-16. Eighteen years later, Columbia reached the quarterfinals. In his honor, the C-BISD Athletics Booster Club gives an annual scholarship.

SPECIAL BRAND OF TENNIS: Former Columbia coach to be honored by Texas Tennis Coaches Association

Charlie Brand

Former Columbia Tennis coach, Charlie Brand, will be inducted into the Texas Tennis Coaches Association Hall of Fame in December.



HOLLY PARKER/The Facts Posted: Sunday, November 27, 2011 2:00 am
By **JOEL LUNA**

WEST COLUMBIA — With a tennis facility named after him and more than 50 years of coaching under his belt at Columbia High School, Charlie Brand did it in the one place he's always wanted to be.

"When Bobby Farmer won state in 1962, I was told by my superintendent at the time that South San Antonio had a tennis program and were interested in me coaching tennis there," Brand said. "Now they were 4A at the time, but I never gave it a second thought because this was my home town, and I had no desire to leave this community. I didn't want to go anywhere else, but I did have opportunities along the way."

Brand will be inducted into the Texas Tennis Coaches Association on Friday in New Braunfels with a recognition dinner during the TTCA convention.

"It surprised me when they called, and I thought somebody was kidding around with me," Brand said. "In fact the gentleman who called, I coached against him during one of the state tournaments with a girls double team. When he finally convinced me that it wasn't a hoax, I was deeply honored.

"I had been nominated for the Texas Hall of Fame in Waco, but was just nominated and never heard from them again," he added. "But this is the big one because it is from the tennis association, and I've always had a special place in my heart for this sport."

Under his tutelage at Columbia High School, Brand helped coach five state champions: Farmer (1962), Van Manning (1976), Joe Langner (1978), Clark Woodson (1985) and Kelly Hay (1991).

"You talk about dedication, for these five individuals it was unbelievable," Brand said. "I have a thousand stories I could tell you about each one, but most important was that they supported each other and as the younger ones came along they fed on what the others had done. It was like a pipeline, and each was exceptional in their own unique way. I was just real fortunate to be around when they came by."

A graduate from Columbia in 1953, Brand lettered in football, tennis, basketball, track and baseball, earning four district doubles titles all four seasons. He and his partner competed in the state tournament and reached the quarterfinals one season.

After earning a degree from the University of Texas, Brand started coaching at Columbia in 1958, retiring in 2003.

"Coach Brand was excellent at assessing the opponent and devising a game plan to outlast an opponent or take him out of his comfort zone," Woodson said of Brand's coaching ability. "But probably his greatest attribute was that of a motivator. He saw so many great players, and he knew that to be a champion it was going to take hard work. He stressed to us that there are no shortcuts."

Woodson defeated Dan Casey from Liberty, 6-2, 6-3 in the state final.

"I'll tell you a quick story about the Manning kid, one night I was getting ready to shut the lights off at the tennis courts, and I kept hearing this thumping sound coming from the board where the kids worked out at," Brand said. "There was this tall, lanky kid and he was teaching himself how to play the game from a book that he had gotten from the library. He was just a freshman at the time and I didn't know him, but that is how he started. He was from Brazoria and he would bike himself over here and on weekends him and the Langner kid would play all day until the night and that is how dedicated they were. But it was the same with the others as well, stories like that, that made them stand out."

Manning defeated Scott Lambert in the finals, and after high school he received a scholarship to Sam Houston, but wound up at the University of Houston.

"He was one of the best teachers I've ever had because he has taught me about patience and how to never get angry," Manning said. "To never let emotions determine who was going to win the match. He was one of the more gentle coaches that I had and has had a great impact in the way I conduct my life every day."

The Charlie Brand Tennis Complex was dedicated in 2004, and he was inducted into the Columbia-Brazoria ISD Athletic Booster Club Hall of Honor in 2007.

Langner was a senior when he won his state title in 1978, as he defeated Doug Snyder from Austin Westlake.

"The thing about coach Brand was that he never told you that you couldn't do it," Langner said. "He always told us that we could win, so whenever we needed a bit of motivation, he had that extra push by telling us that we could do it. But certainly his practices and no slacking or no excuses regiment was something that also helped us a lot."

"I think it is great and he deserves this honor. I am happy for coach."

In the past 10 years, a scholarship in his name has been given by the Columbia Brazoria Booster Club. Besides his coaching profession, Brand taught Algebra II for 46 years.

He will be hoping to say all the right words with his induction speech.

"I am going to praise my wife for putting up with me and thank all of those kids that went through the program," Brand said. "The dedication that those kids had was unbelievable. The administration gave me a free hand and they spent quite a bit of money for bus travel and tournaments, but our kids were well behaved and I never had to worry about that."

Former Columbia coaches recall past playoff runs



HOLLY PARKER/The Facts

Remembering the past

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

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Posted: Thursday, December 2, 2010 2:00 am

By **JOEL LUNA**

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.

Joel Luna is the sports editor for The Facts. Contact him at 979-237-0160

Brand in 44th year coaching at Columbia

Posted: Sunday, May 5, 2002 1:00 am

By **Billy Loveless** | **0 comments**

WEST COLUMBIA - For Charlie Brand, Columbia High School truly is his home.

The Columbia coach has spent the past 44 years at the school as the head tennis coach, along with assisting through the years in football.

But he was associated with the school even earlier.

Before beginning his long coaching stint at the school, Brand was a star tennis player at the school, advancing to the state quarterfinals in 1952.

Brand obviously enjoyed his high school years at Columbia, since he took a coaching job at the school in 1958 - only one year after completing college at the University of Texas.

The 66-year-old coach has been there ever since. And he wouldn't have it any other way.

"We had an administrator that said you can never go back home to coach," Brand said. "Well, I haven't had any problems at all. In fact, I wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

Brand has obviously not had too many bumps in the road at Columbia. One look at his resume proves it.

Throughout his 44 years, Brand has coached a Columbia athlete at the state tournament 22 times. He's also coached a total of 36 athletes that reached the state event, with five players winning state championships.

In the history of the school, he's coached five of Columbia's six state tennis champions in 1962, 1976, 1978, 1985 and 1991. The only Columbia state champ he didn't coach was, surprisingly, his sister in 1952.

"I've had some good tennis players," Brand said. "We've never had the depth of some of the other teams, but it seems we always have some good ones."

This year is no exception.

Brand will be making another trip to the state tournament on Monday and Tuesday when he coaches Columbia standouts Teddy Di Blasi and Kalie Koenig. This is the third straight year for the three to travel to the state finals together.

"This is my real thrill," Brand said. "I love the competition and I love the pressure. The state meet is all pressure and you can't let up. You can't lose focus."

It's the thrill of the competition that Brand thrives on, and that's also what keeps him going strong. He's still enjoying his job, and doesn't really know when he might retire.

"I really don't know," Brand said about possibly retiring. "People tell me I'm crazy to keep going, but I've enjoyed it. Especially with the kids I deal with. These are all good kids."

Columbia coaches known for toughness

Posted: Sunday, September 30, 2012 2:00 am

By **JOEL LUNA** | 0 comments

WEST COLUMBIA — Leaders come in every form and fashion, and for many West Columbia Roughneck football players through the years, their head coaches played a big part in their lives.

The list of head coaches who have passed through the 90-year plus something football program is long and impressive.

From the early ones of Mac McWhorter (1920), Herbert Duke (1921) and Joe Bruton (1922) to the likes of Flash Walker (1947-52), E.S. Golson, Jack Hays (1969-1979) Ed Derrich (1980-1993) and Leland Surovik (2007-2011), some Roughneck coaches have built an impressive resume at the school.

“Back in those days our coaches were pretty strict, there was no fooling around or anything like that,” Charlie Brand said (1949-1953). “Flash Walker, he was kind of like a second father to me because of the way he was. But it was Marvin Gray who got me interested in athletics and he was my mentor.”

Brand used to live next door to Gray in West Columbia, and Gray was also an outstanding player on the 1940s Roughneck football teams.

“When World War II came and they bombed Pearl Harbor, Marvin (Gray) along with Dick Kreagor and Dan Stephens plus a few others lied about their age and joined the service,” Brand said. “When they got out they still had a year left of eligibility, and then graduated in mid-semester. That’s the kind of guy Marvin was, he stood up for what he believed in.”

One of the better players to pass through the Roughneck program was James Ray Smith (1945-49).

“I remember Flash as being a real compassionate kind of guy,” Smith said. “I don’t remember him getting on us too hard because everybody that played was playing to the best of their ability. I remember going to Baylor and I remember when he used to tell us to don’t ever walk onto the field with any regret, and he was like that.”

After succeeding at Baylor, Smith went on to make five Pro Bowls in the NFL for the Cleveland Browns and Dallas Cowboys.

“The thing I remember about those days was that they got us ready for life,” Smith said. “They taught us how to deal with life’s decisions through football. They also taught us about always keeping and going forward despite any obstacles.”

Hays took Columbia to its only state final in 1969, where it lost to Brownwood, 34-16. For 11 seasons, Hays experienced being the head coach at Columbia.

“In my years here, we had good running backs and good offensive linemen,” Hays said. “We had a defense that could play with anybody, but we didn’t have the capability of spreading the field like they do now.

“Of course when you have running backs that weigh 220 pounds you have to run the ball, and we did,” he continued. “What we did was adapt to the philosophy of your offense to your players, and it seemed to work.”

Losing to Brownwood in the final was the second time it had happened to Hays.

After coming over from El Campo where in 1967 he took the Ricebirds to the state final and lost to Brownwood.

“We played at Texas Stadium, and they got their trophy and we didn’t, we got a second place trophy,” Hays said of that encounter. “But just like they say in the Super Bowl, you don’t get much recognition when you are the second-place team.”

His own son, Jackie Hays Jr., played for him when they reached the state final in 1969.

“He was an outstanding leader and a very solid person that you want to have lead young men,” Jackie Hays Jr. said.

“But he would get on you and you would know when you would be gotten on. But I could not have been more privileged than to be coached by him.”

For some head coaches, it was the experience of coaching players and then getting to see them later on in adulthood.

“I remember becoming friends with some of those kids when they played for me,” 2001-06 coach Brian Lane said. “Now it is pretty neat seeing some of those same players coaching themselves.”

The list says 20 head coaches have passed through the West Columbia Roughneck football program, but there are some names missing.

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Former CHS coach Brand passes away

Posted: Sunday, April 14, 2013 2:00 am

By **JOEL LUNA** joel.luna@thefacts.com

WEST COLUMBIA — Charlie Brand, an iconic figure in West Columbia, died Wednesday.

With more than half a century in the coaching business, a majority of it was right there in his home town.

A tennis and football coach at Columbia High School, Brand's way with athletes, students and people in general really stood out.

"It is kind of hard to take for a gentleman who served this community and school district for so many years," Columbia athletics director Randy Lynch said. "He was a very special man. My wife played tennis for him and he was such a positive role model to so many and always had a smile on his face. He was a true professional on and off the courts.

"There were so many that he coached in football and tennis over the years and it was his positive influence that really stood apart," he continued. "He was a great man and it is really tough to lose him. You know he was also a great math teacher."

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. today at The United Methodist Church in West Columbia.

In November 2011, Brand was inducted into the Texas Tennis Coaches Association.

"I had been nominated for the Texas Hall of Fame in Waco, but was just nominated and never heard from them again," Brand had said during that time. "But this is the big one because it is from the tennis association, and I've always had a special place in my heart for this sport."

It was a sport that Brand played as a Roughneck and all four years at Columbia played at the state tournament in doubles, reaching the quarterfinals one year. He graduated in 1953 from Columbia and returned in 1958 to start his coaching career until retirement in 2003.

As a tennis coach, Brand produced five state champions, starting with Bob Farmer, 1962 and followed by Van Manning, 1976; Joe Langner, 1978; Clark Woodson, 1985; and Kelly Hay, 1991.

In those 29 seasons that he taught the game to many former Roughneck and Lady Roughneck players, Brand sent a player to the state tournament each year.

"Most of coach Brand's stories were about his students and this one was about me getting upset during a match and I thought this kid had cheated me out of a point," Van Manning said. "Well, coach Brand let me act like an idiot the whole match. But it really was what coach Brand told me after the match that affected me in so many ways. In his mild-mannered and gentle way, he told

me that I let a single point affect my whole match and that I was better than that kid. That kid never beat me again.

“But that lesson helped me to never act like that again,” he continued. “Coach was not the hollering type and I had so much respect for him. It was a lesson that you couldn’t get from a book or anything and I pouted thinking that I had been robbed. So basically I acted like a fool for nothing. But he really did touch a lot of lives and not just in tennis, in football and in the classroom.”

Van Manning was making a push to have all five state champions serve as pallbearers.

“He just meant so much to a lot of people and in me he did a lot of mentoring in all aspects of life not just in sports,” Van Manning said.

In 1952, Brand was an all district performer for the Roughnecks. Through the years, Brand coached football and was part of the 1969 coaching staff for Jack Hays Sr. when they reached the state finals in Class 3A. That season Columbia lost to Brownwood, 34-16.

“Under our regime, Charlie was a mainstay defensive coordinator and was outstanding in tennis and a noted math teacher,” Hays Sr. said. “He helped so many adults, children, but Charlie was a stickler and he set the bar high for people. But they learned.

“I knew Charlie from my first year in El Campo in 1962 to this year and he had a lot of loves in his life,” he continued. “He loved his family, his university-Texas and coaching. Charlie had all kinds of priorities in his life but more importantly he was a proud parent and grandparent.”

Back in 2004, Columbia-Brazoria ISD named the Charlie Brand Tennis Complex in his honor. In 2007 Brand was in the first Columbia-Brazoria ISD Athletic Booster Club Hall of Honor.

The C-BISD Athletic Booster Club also gives an annual scholarship in his name.

“I didn’t see it coming, I just saw him a couple of weeks ago,” Lagner said. “I think there were times when he should have gotten angry at us at tennis practice, but he never did. On our bus rides, coach Brand was always engaging, he was always talking sports, tennis, baseball no matter the subject. But one thing I always thought where he was overlooked was his math teaching skills. By the time you left his classroom, you would understand the problems.”

Brand taught Algebra II for 46 years.

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