



Clifford John Prock

March 13, 1929 - July 17, 2012

Clifford John Prock, a resident of Searcy since 1960, died at his home Tuesday, July 17, following a lengthy battle with a form of Lewy Body dementia. He was born March 13, 1929, in Hollis, Okla., to the late Lonnie and Lillie Mae Hooks Prock. He was 83.

Prock is survived by his wife of 64 years, Charlene, of Searcy, Ark.; three children – Martina (and Ronnie) Peacock of Rogers, Ark.; Mona Daniel of Sulphur Springs, Texas; and Cam (and Robbin) Prock of Rogers, Ark. Also surviving are eight grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and three step-grandchildren.

Prock was a football coach for 33 years, including 28 years at Harding University. He was honored as District 17 NAIA Coach of the Year in 1969, 1972 and 1976 and NAIA Area IV Coach of the Year in 1976. He was a charter member of the Harding University Athletic Hall of Fame and the Hollis (Oklahoma)/ Harmon County Sports Hall of Fame. He was named to the NAIA Hall of Fame in 1991, the Southwestern State University Hall of Fame in 2006, and the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame in 2008.

At the time of his retirement in 1987, he was the fifth most successful active coach in the NAIA and Dean of the Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference. He had coached 10 NAIA All-Americans, four Academic All-Americans and 63 All-AIC honorees. His former players gave him a clock with the following inscription on an attached gold plate:

Coach Prock, DUTY, HONOR, LOVE, We learned these from you, Bison

Football Players 1960-1987.

His most successful season as a coach was in 1972 when Harding's Bisons were Co-Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference champions and winners of the Cowboy Bowl.

When Prock began coaching at Harding in 1960, strength training was a new concept whose critics thought working with weights would cause players to lose their speed and quickness. He had always been able to build just about anything, so Prock scrounged around the maintenance department for scraps of wood he could use to build weights. He eventually built the weight room, and weight lifting became an integral part of training to play football at Harding.

Prock served as a Sergeant 1st Class with the 45th Infantry Division of the Oklahoma National Guard during the Korean War, along with 65 others from Hollis, who were called to active duty in 1950. "We trusted our lives with one another," he once said of Company D. For 24 years, Company D has held an annual reunion, hosted by one of the veterans or family members.

Prock was a man of perseverance. His mom died when he was 2, so he lived with his paternal grandmother until she died when he was 9. He lived with his dad and stepmother until his graduation from high school in 1948. After he and Charlene married, he purchased an old barn for \$50, and he and his dad made it into a three-room house – debt free!

Following his military service, Prock attended Southwest Oklahoma State University on a football scholarship and the G.I. bill, completing both a bachelor's and master's degree in industrial arts. He taught Shop at Clinton (Okla.) High School during the years he coached football there.

Prock was an accomplished woodcarver who appeared on two television shows and in several newspaper features. The family's home is filled with furniture and furnishings that he made. He once built a 15-foot ski boat and a 33-foot party barge for family fun. He carved souvenir-sized Santas, ducks, golfers and Indians. He was invited to be a resident carver in Branson, Mo., but chose to stay at home to teach private carving classes in his shop. Always

fascinated with log cabins, Prock relocated to their back yard and restored a 150-year-old authentic log cabin from its original homestead in Mt. Vernon, Ark.

Few people were aware of Prock's musical interest. He liked to play the harmonica, he loved opera music and his favorite song was "Unchained Melody." But more than any other interest, he loved sports, especially football. He played football in high school and college. He coached football in high school and college. His son played quarterback for his football team, and his daughters were among the cheerleaders for his team.

The Procks have been long-time members of the West Side Church of Christ, where he was a Sunday school teacher, deacon and elder.

Tribute Wall

JL

“ I will forever remember Coach Prock as a great man of God! He was so instrumental in my coming to Harding. Though I was only blessed to have played for him during his last two years on the sideline, his influence led me into coaching and education, and still influences me today.

In visiting his home (not near enough) in the past few years of his life, I was so encouraged by the love Mrs. Prock had for him in taking care of him for so many years. What an example of what a family and marriage is all about!

Coach's motto was "BE THE BEST", and he and Mrs. Prock lived it!

I send my condolences and encouragement to the family during this time.

*Jim Laughary
Bison Football
1986-1990*

Jim Laughary - May 04, 2016 at 06:20 PM

AJ

“ Mrs.Prock and Family, there are not words that can really sum up Coach that have not already been said. We loved him so much and what he stood for. He was a GREAT person. I remember coming up to Harding in the early 60's to watch Johnny and Coach Prock was bigger than life and 10 years later I got the chance to play for him. Best choice I ever made was coming to Harding and getting to play for him!! All of mine and Carla's love to you, Martina, Mona and Cam. You are in our thoughts and prayers and will continue to be!!!!

Allen and Carla Jeter - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

RS

“ Coach Prock was a rock, both as a Christian man and coach. He taught so many young men by example. Probably the greatest thing he taught us was that you could coach football and do it without cursing. What a tremendous thing that was and is. I'm one of his former players who should never have stepped on a the college football field, but he never did or said anything to discourage me. I look back and see so many things that Coach prock's program did for me. His Christian leadership as a man and coach are qualities few have, however he showed us how to do it. As a Cristian, I know Coach finished his race here an is now wit his God in Heaven. In fact, he is probably talking with my Dad who passed away in May asking him, "What in the world were you thinking, sending those two Shock boys from Conway to play for me!"

Robert Shock - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

LE

“ Coach Prock will be missed in our heart for a long time

LaWanna H. Edwards - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

JL

“ Clifford John Prock

Jim Laughary - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

DT

“ Barbara and I have just returned from a trip out of town...so sorry to hear of Coach Prock's passing...we came to Harding at the same time...he was my line coach and help us so much during that first year...he was a credit to Harding, to his family and to those of us who had the honor to play for him...Thank you Coach.

DR. Billy Joe Thrasher - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

SH

“ *What an example Coach Prock was to so many of us. Just as in life, we did not always win and often had hurdles that seemed that we would never get over, but coach always had a solution. From duct tape on our ankles to knee pads on our rib cages he found a way to get through whatever problem presented itself with the resources available. Most of all he influenced molded men out of so many of us that may never have amounted to much if it weren't for the life changing experience of being in the Bison family with he and Mrs. Prock. Coach, your legacy lives on in the lives of those you touched.*

Steve "Foot" Hunter - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

JW

“ *Ms.Prock,
We just received information that Coach Prock passed away. I owe much to that man. I do today because of his influence. I coach football, but more importantly I shape lives of you men. MANY MEMORIES.."football church"...rides in "old blue".."elvis"..Many young young men are better today because of Coach Prock. My family gets VERY TIRED of listening to all the Coach Prock and Ms. Prock stories...But because of Him and Ms. Prock we are ALL a better group of people.
Ms. Prock...please know that it is with great sadness that the Coach Jay Witt family wishes nothing but heart felt sympathy to you and to your family. Coach Prock will be remembered as a legacy that Harding University will always remember as a true man of GOD and a friend to all...*

Jay and Melody Witt - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

TE

“ *We spent many memorable Saturdays watching Bison football. Our sympathy to the family.*

Tom and Melody Eddins - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

OE

“ John befriended me when I had car trouble in Searcy. Come to find out, we shared a good friend. He related that my friend was important to him and his team, not because of the youngsters football prowess but because of the great tenacity that player exhibited by commitment to stay in John's program, when others would have quit. He loved that dedication and the youngster played his next three years. Why, do I tell this little story? John cared for everyone of his players and was responsible for bringing so many to the "Bison's". This so important for all of us to remember. Time after time we must "stay in the ditch", a lesson John taught so well.....oel castner

Oel - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM

WH

“ What great memories and what a truly remarkable life.

Wesley Hunt - February 10, 2016 at 04:11 PM