

Hall of Fame inducts 2

Hinchee played on first girls' team & first to be enshrined

BY CHRIS EVANS
PRESS EDITOR

By shooting out the lights, Jeanne Hinchee brought her life and career out of the dark.

"You have no idea how many doors were opened up for me and my career because of basketball," said Hinchee, a 1978 graduate of Crittenden County High School and very possibly the Lady Rockets' all-time leading scorer.

Hinchee will become the first female basketball player inducted into the Marion-Crittenden County Basketball Hall of Fame during a ceremony Friday night.

Being first in basketball is nothing new to Hinchee. As an eighth grader, she started on the very first girls' basketball team at Crittenden County High School. In 1973 when girls programs were instituted in schools throughout Kentucky, Crittenden put one of its most successful teams ever on the floor. In eight games that inaugural season, the Lady Rockets were undefeated.

Crittenden was blessed with some pretty good talent that initial year with a couple of players who went on to the college ranks. Hinchee had a very successful career at Austin Peay and teammate Markita Brown played collegiately in Mississippi.

Cindy Almindinger, a physical education

JEANNE HINCHEE
At Crittenden County 1973-1978
Points: 1,559
All-Fifth District 4 times
All-3 Rivers Conference 3 times
All-Second Region 1978
East-West All Star Game 1978



At Austin Peay University 1978-1982
Assist: 507 (2nd all time)
Steals: 131 (10th all time)
Games played: 115 (7th all time)

teacher, was the first coach. Hinchee said Crittenden had some other really good athletes on that team – including Mary Ann Green who had played organized basketball in Tennessee before transferring to Crittenden – and with other clubs just getting started, the Lady Rockets were just a cut above the rest in the area.

The next season, point guard Hinchee led the Lady Rockets to a Fifth District championship. Hinchee scored 1,559 in her high school career, a period when the three-point shot was not part of the game. Although Hinchee was a good long-range shooter, she specialized in the 16-foot jumper.

As a senior, the Lady Rockets played for the Second Region championship under coach Joe McCord. It was the best post-season performance in team history.

"I would have to say that coach McCord's influence on my basketball skills was the main reason I got an opportunity to play in college," Hinchee said. "He developed what skills I had and pushed me to be better than

I was."

Hinchee said the team her senior year was comprised of some great players, including C i n d y B r o o k s h i r e, Teresa Fox, Debbie York and Cindy Wright. The Lady Rockets breezed through the Fifth District beating Trigg and Caldwell behind Hinchee's 74 points in two games.



Hinchee at CCHS

The girls beat Providence in the Second Region semifinals, but lost to West Hopkins in the title game.

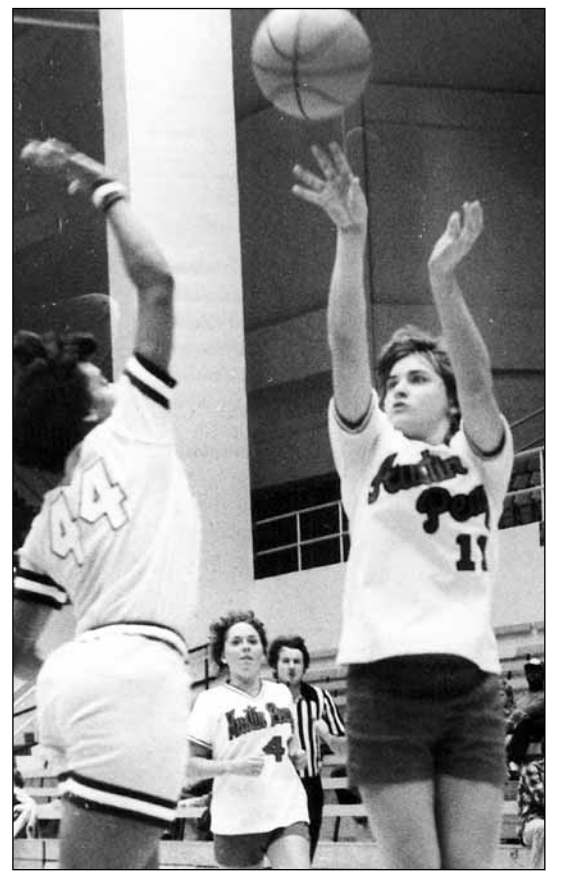
"Playing basketball at Crittenden County was the most memorable, fun time in my life," Hinchee said. "As a new program we enjoyed great support from the community."

"Those are the times I look back on in my childhood and think about the great fun we had."

Hinchee said she never realized at the time how much of an impact basketball would have on her professional career.

"I had no idea how many doors it would open up for me and my career. I finally realized that after college."

Basketball paid for her college education



Hinchee at Austin Peay

at APSU where she was an All-Ohio Valley Conference Freshman, four-year starter and up until only recently the school's all-time assist leader.

After college, Hinchee spent a few months as a substitute teacher then joined the military. She went to officer training school and eventually retired from the U.S. Army as a major and returned to college in Chattanooga, Tenn., where she also works full-time as a consultant for a community college. She's months away from graduating with a second bachelor's degree.

Ceremony between games

The Hall of Fame Ceremony will be held between the boys' and girls' game Friday night. The boys play the first game of a doubleheader against St. Mary. It is also homecoming.

Litchfield's accomplishments vastly numerous for 58 years

BY CHRIS EVANS
PRESS EDITOR

Although Louis Litchfield has been gone for nearly 40 years, his legacy lives on in Crittenden County.

Litchfield, born at Blackford in 1910, rose to become one of the most noted individuals in Crittenden County history. He was a respected educator, a c o m p l i s h e d coach, excellent public speaker, devout Christian and one of the most decorated administrators from this area.

Litchfield will be inducted into the Marion-Crittenden County Basketball Hall of Fame Friday night. His inclusion into the shrine was based as much on his accomplishments away from the basketball court as it was on his many successes as a coach.

In six seasons as a coach in Crittenden County, Litchfield won five district championships. He coached three current Hall of Famers – George Hart, Bruce Belt and Don "Sucky" Brasher – and took his Blackford team to the state tournament.

Ironically, Litchfield was blind in one eye and it's not clear if he ever played basketball himself. His daughter, Bettye Vaughan, who lives in Marion, doesn't ever recall her father speaking of playing ball as a youngster growing up in the edge of Webster County on the Tradewater River.

Litchfield, just 20 years old, took his first coaching job at Blackford in 1930. Later that season, in early 1931 his team won the regional championship and advanced to the state tournament at Lexington. His team beat



Louis C. Litchfield

LOUIS LITCHFIELD
As a coach
Teams: Blackford, Cobb, Nebo, Farmersville, Frances, Fredonia, Crittenden.
Titles: At least 7 district championships and 1 regional championship.
State Tournament: Blackford 1931

As an educator, administrator & other
Principal and superintendent
Chairman KHSAA Board of Control
Chairman Murray State Board of Regents
Asst. Commissioner of Agriculture for Kentucky
Deacon Marion Baptist Church
Referee for state basketball tournament
First District Education Association president

heralded Carr Creek, but lost to Tolu, the eventual state champion. Blackford was dubbed as a "gymless wonder" by the Louisville newspaper because the team didn't have an indoor court.

Litchfield left Blackford after one season and enrolled at Murray State College.

"He would teach and coach one year to earn a little money then he would go to Murray for a year. He did that for several years and coached at several little schools around the area," his daughter said. "He finally graduated from Murray in 1937."

All told, Litchfield coached at Blackford, Cobb, Fredonia, Farmersville, Nebo, Frances and Crittenden County. He spent three seasons at Frances, building the small school into a regional powerhouse. He won the district championship every season he was at Frances, from 1947 to 1950. It was there that Litchfield coached Hart, the state's all-time leading scorer at the time.

Litchfield was the first principal and basketball coach at the newly formed county high school following consolidation in 1950. His Crittenden County basketball teams were as well superior to most others in the area. In



Louisville Courier-Journal article noting that Litchfield had been elected president of the KHSAA Board of Control.

three seasons, he won two district titles. Ironically, his best team – a club that won 24 games in 1951-52 – was beaten in the district tournament because several of the players came down with the mumps.

Although his team was knocked out of post-season competition, Litchfield stayed active. A highly respected basketball official, he was a referee for the state championship game that year.

After retiring from coaching, Litchfield

Marion-Crittenden County Basketball HALL OF FAME

Member	Inducted
Carlisle Towery	1998
George Hart	1998
Bennett Smith	1999
Curtis Turley	1999
Gerald "Hoopy" Tabor	2000
James Phillips	2000
Don Green	2001
Bruce Belt	2001
Don "Sucky" Brasher	2002
Greg Thurman	2002
Hugh Highfil	2002
Tommy Wring	2002
Glenn "Ace" Davidson	2003
Lige Shadown	2003
Ercel Little	2003
Spencer Cozart	2004
Jeff Shewcraft	2004
Ronnie Moss	2005
Ellis Simmons	2005
W.A. Franklin	2006
Jeanne Hinchee	2007
Louis Litchfield	2007

became superintendent and oversaw the consolidation of Marion and Crittenden high schools in 1957.

Charismatic and sharp witted, Litchfield was a success in every endeavor he sought. "As a coach he was strict," Brasher said. "He ran a tight program. He was fair, but it was clear that he ran the show."

Indeed, he ended up running nearly every organization with which he became affiliated. Litchfield served several terms on the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Board of Control, the First District Education Association and the Murray State Board of Regents. He rose to the leadership post of each one of those. Litchfield was also assistant Commissioner of Agriculture for Kentucky from 1943 to 1947.

Litchfield died tragically young in 1968 of rheumatic fever. He was just 58 years old.

More from Hall of Fame on WMJL...

In case you can't make the game Friday night, catch all of the action on WMJL Radio at 102.7 FM.

Basketball play-by-play announcer Nicky Winders will have Hall of Fame inductee Jeanne Hinchee on as his halftime guest during the first game of Friday's doubleheader.

Tipoff for the boys' game is 6 p.m.