

Athletics Hall of Fame to Induct Two on Friday

Cozart was 3-sport standout at Crittenden

STAFF REPORT

David Cozart's modus operandi as a three-sport high school athlete and collegiate football player has clearly spilled over into his career and personal life as an adult.

The 1989 Crittenden County High School graduate has found great success as a civic leader, community organizer, mentor and minister in Lexington. Four decades ago, his energy and effort were tantamount to his triumphs on the fields, courts and diamonds. On Friday, Cozart will be inducted into the Farmers Bank Marion-Crittenden County Athletics Hall of Fame. It is the 21st year for hall of fame honors, recognizing individual and team accomplishments of student-athletes.



Cozart

Cozart was a lively defender and good scorer in basketball. He averaged eight points as a junior and more than a dozen as a senior, but he was more widely lauded for his defense. Quickness along with long arms and legs gave him the length to defend inside or out. He was selected to the All Fifth District team as a junior and senior. His team was knocked out of the regional tournament in 1999 by the Travis Ford led Madisonville Maroons. In the district tournament that year, Crittenden beat Livingston

Central 103-52, one of the last times a Rocket team scored over 100 points.

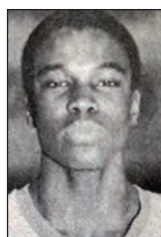
"Nobody gives a bigger effort than David. Sometimes he tries too hard," his basketball coach Joe McCord told The Crittenden Press for a post-season honors article in 1989.

In baseball, he was a feared middle-of-the-order batter who had a tremendous junior season that is to this day one of the best in school history. His seven homers in the spring of 1988 is the best single-season performance ever. That year, he batted .423 and drove in 29 runs. He pitched and played first base mostly, but Cozart's versatility was clearly illustrated by the fact that he also played on the middle infield at times. He was selected as the Rocket baseball team's most valuable player in 1988.

Football is where Cozart left his greatest mark on CCHS and caught the attention of Campbellsville University. He earned the starting quarterback job in 1996 the year after Crittenden won the Class A state championship after being a backup on the title team. Cozart's passing efficiency was always very good, but he played in an era when throwing the football wasn't commonplace. His best individual performance came in the 1987 season as a junior. Cozart threw for eight touchdowns and 865 yards.

It was in that same year that Cozart connected with teammate Jerry Jessup to set

a KHSAA state record for the longest passing touchdown. The 99-yard strike came at Reidland and is tied with others in Kentucky as the longest ever.



Cozart 1988 Photo

Cozart was an All Western Kentucky Conference selection twice and finished his high school football career with 1,180 yards passing, which was among the best ever when his career ended. As a senior, he rushed for almost 400 yards.

In college, Cozart was a quarterback at Campbellsville where he was the team's career leader in yards per attempt when he ended his career in 1992. He is now tied for fourth all-time in that statistical category. Cozart played three seasons at Campbellsville where his average yards per completion (18.6) remains No. 3 on the school's all-time list. He was also a punter and tight end for the Tigers.

"I was supposed to be doing my quarterback stuff one day and instead I was down with the punters," Cozart remembers.

He was just goofing around, but busted a high tight spiral that caught his coach's eye.

"He yelled, 'Who just punted that?'" Cozart recalls. When Cozart fessed up to being in the wrong drill, the coach



David Cozart was best known for his defense on the basketball court, but he scored in double figures as a senior. Here is a picture of him guarding one of Caldwell County's best players at the time, Michael Gray, who is now Brescia's women's coach.

made him a punter.

He was the starting QB as a junior at Campbellsville, but tweaked his knee and missed a couple of games. During that time John Myers (former Russellville coach who has ties to Crittenden County) filled in. When Cozart returned to action, he played tight end.

"I loved it. We weren't a passing team, but I got to crack back and just let loose, something I enjoyed," he said.

Cozart also played two years of baseball at Campbellsville, mostly as a third baseman. But when his role on the football team increased, he quit playing baseball.

"Honestly, I think baseball was my favorite. I wish I would

have paid more attention to it in high school and college," he said.

Humbled, he said, was his first reaction to being selected to the hall of fame. He also said there were many others besides him who deserve to be honored first.

"I am very proud of where I came from and very proud to be part of this induction ceremony," he said.

Cozart, who has a bachelor's degree in psychology/sociology and a master's in theology, has 25 years experience as a community organizer. He is currently director of the Lexington Leadership Foundation's Fatherhood Initiative.

O'Leary sharpened her game on the playground against boys

STAFF REPORT

It has been 33 years since Angie (Hobbs) O'Leary wore a Lady Rockets basketball uniform, but her mark on the school's athletics programs remains mighty strong.

The 1986 Crittenden County High School graduate is one of two individuals being inducted into the Farmers Bank Marion-Crittenden County Athletics Hall of Fame Friday night. She still holds two track and field records and she's an avid supporter and volunteer scorekeeper for the CCHS basketball and baseball programs because she has children playing.



O'Leary

O'Leary was a strong 5-foot-8 center on the basketball team from her eighth-grade season on. She ranks No. 14 on the all-time girls' scoring list with 830 points and was a tremendous rebounder in the day, although those records haven't survived. In high school she was a center, playing mostly with her back to basket.

"I felt like my job was to get my defender on the bench," O'Leary said. "When they threw the ball inside to me, it never went back out. I went to the basket."

Her aggressive play would often draw fouls, and she did a whole lot of damage at the free throw line, where she was very accurate. Plus, it made her assignment easier in the low post.

"I knew if I could get their starter in foul trouble, then I would get to play against the reserve and then I'd have it made," she said.

She grew up playing against boys on the outdoor court at



Angie (Hobbs) O'Leary's scoring numbers rank among the high school's all-time leaders.

Tolu School, which helped her improve her game. It also developed her outside shot, which was a tool not often used during her high school days when she was one of the tallest players on the floor and stayed close to the basket. But in college, she was moved to forward and used that outside touch to continue as an offensive threat.

O'Leary was a key contributor in Crittenden County's victory over Hopkinsville in the Second Region Tournament in 1984. She and current Lady Rocket girls' coach Shannon Hodge brought their team from behind as the Rocket girls beat Hoptown in the first round. The lost in the semifinal round that year to Webster County.

There were a couple of things that made that regional tournament victory memorable, O'Leary recalls. First, it's one of the rare victories Crittenden County has achieved in post-season regional play. Also, it pitted Crittenden coach Joe McCord against his brother Bob, who coached Hopkinsville.

"I remember their mother came to the game. She had on orange pants and blue blazer and sat at half court," Hobbs said. "Because they were brothers I remember we played Hopkinsville quite a bit over the summer before that season, so we knew them pretty well."

Just a sophomore, O'Leary led Crittenden in scoring with 16 points in that regional tournament victory. Playing in the regional tournaments were among her fondest memories. She recalls the 1986 regional tournament, too, but more for what happened afterwards than during the game, when Crittenden lost to Madisonville.

Unbeknownst to O'Leary, her coach that year, Jimmy Croft, had been discussing opportunities to play collegiately with the Paducah Community College coach, David Hoskins. However, he hadn't told O'Leary about it, preferring to allow all her focus to be on playing in the tournament. After the game, he told her get dressed and get outside there was someone wanting to talk to her.

O'Leary had already been offered a scholarship a few weeks earlier to play at Wabash Valley in Illinois, but there was going to be some added expenses for living there that she'd have to pay herself.

"Coach Croft had asked me not to commit because he thought I could get a better deal," O'Leary recalls.

So when the PCC coach offered her a fully-paid chance to play for the Lady Indians, O'Leary accepted. But it wasn't without some emotion.

"That was the biggest decision I'd ever made in my life to that point," she remembers.

O'Leary was selected to the All Second Region Team that season and she was to be recognized at the regional championship game. The PCC recruiter asked her to sign and bring him the scholarship acceptance form at that game.

"I remember that being the hardest thing, walking down those steps and giving him those papers," O'Leary says with a chuckle. "I felt like I was signing my life away."

At PCC, O'Leary shared a double-wide mobile home off-campus with eight other players. She was a key offensive contributor as a freshman, earning the team's Sixth Man Award. As a sophomore, she started the first part of the season, but some family issues in her personal life began to take a toll on her performance. By the last half of the season, her playing time was reduced and she believes that hurt her chances for going to a four-year school and extending her career.

After college, O'Leary went to work at Carhart in Providence where she met her husband, Bobby. Later she finished her associate's degree and PCC fulfilled its commitment to pay all of her tuition until it was done. The couple has four children, and their two youngest boys, Sean and Erik, play basketball for the Rockets. O'Leary sits right down the court from them as the team's official book keeper. She says it's tough to stay quiet - an unwritten rule for those at the scorer's table - but it's probably the best place for



At Paducah Community College she earned the team's Sixth Man Award as a freshman.

her. "If I was sitting in the stands I would probably be a fool like I am at football games," she said.

Sean, the son who is a senior, was a standout football player for the Rockets and will be playing next year at Campbellsville University.

In addition to basketball, O'Leary was a star in track and field. She remembers that coach Jerry Thurman asked her to come out for the team as a sophomore. She learned how to throw the discus and shot put from other players, particularly Derrick Cozart. It wasn't long before she mastered the technique and set school record in both events. Those records still stand at 34-foot-1 for the shot and 89-foot-6 in discus.

And although she never played women's softball in high school, she became the catcher for PCC's team while in college.

INDUCTION CEREMONY

Two former student-athletes will be enshrined in the Farmers Bank Marion-Crittenden County Athletics Hall of Fame during a ceremony between basketball games Friday night at Rocket Arena. There will be a memory room for the new inductees of the Hall of Fame their families, friends and former coaches and teammates. There will be a come-and-go reception in the Rocket Arena meeting room. It will be open from 6 p.m., until the end of the final game. Also, Friday is homecoming and there will be a ceremonial crowning of a homecoming queen and king prior to the girls' game, which opens the double-header. Coronation of the king and queen will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Marion-Crittenden County Hall of Fame Roll Call

Player, Year Inducted, Sport

- Andrews, Josh - 2005 - Football
- Belt, Bruce - 2001 - Basketball
- Beverly, David - 2007 - Football
- Brasher, Don "Sucky" - 2002 - Basketball
- Bridwell, Lynn "Lefty" - 2009 - Baseball
- Brown, Nicky - 2009 - Basketball
- Champion, Jamie - 2006 - Football
- Conyer, Roy - 2001 - Football
- Cozart, David - 2019 - Football, Baseball, Basketball
- Cozart, Spencer - 2004 - Basketball
- Croft, Jimmy - 2013 - Basketball
- Daniels, Markeata Brown - 2009 - Basketball
- Davidson, Glen "Ace" - 2003 - Basketball
- Morgan Dooms - 2015 - Basketball
- Easley, Clinton - 2005 - Football
- Elder, Houston "Hound" - 2001 - Football
- Faith, Leonard - 2008 - Basketball
- Franklin, W.A. - 2006 - Basketball
- Gates, Pat - 2002 - Football
- Grady, Orville "Soupy" - 1998 - Football
- Gray, Vanessa - 2011 - Basketball
- Green, Don - 2001 - Basketball



- Hart, Brad - 2017 - Football, Basketball
- Hart, George - 1998 - Basketball
- Head, Frank - 1998 - Football
- Hicklin, Robert "Hickie" - 2002 - Football
- Highfill, Hugh - 2002 - Basketball
- Hill, Tim - 2016 - Basketball, Track
- Hinchee, Jeanee - 2007 - Basketball
- Hodge, Denis - 2006 - Football
- Hodge, Shannon Collins - 2008 - Basketball
- Hopper, Jimmy - 2005 - Football
- Hughes, Charles "Turkey" - 1999 - Football

- Johnson, Tom - 2001 - Football
- Knott, Curtis "Gig" - 1998 - Football
- Litchfield, Louis - 2007 - Basketball
- Little, Dwight - 1998 - Football
- Little, Ercel - 2003 - Basketball
- Martin, Turner - 2012 - Basketball
- Mathieu, Jessica - 2018 - Basketball
- McChesney, James "Burlap" - 2003 - Football
- Mills, Jim Fred - 1999 - Football
- Moss, Ronnie - 2003 - Football
- Moss, Ronnie - 2005 - Basketball
- Mott, Chad - 2006 - Football
- Mott, Dennis - 2010 - Football
- Myers, Kyle - 2017 - Basketball, Football
- O'Leary, Angie Hobbs - 2019 - Basketball, Track
- Ordway, Bruce - 2008 - Basketball
- Perryman, Chad - 2011 - Baseball
- Phillips, James - 2000 - Basketball
- Rich, Joey - 2014 - Football
- Rushing, Woodson "Chuck" - 1999 - Football
- Shadowen, Lige - 2003 - Basketball
- Shewcraft, Jeff - 2004 - Basketball
- Simmons, Ellis - 2005 - Basketball

- Smith, Bennett - 1999 - Basketball
- Starnes, Al - 2004 - Football
- Starnes, Angela - 2018 - Track Coach
- Stewart, Wompie - 2007 - Football
- Summers, Von - 2014 - Football
- Swisher, Bob - 2000 - Football
- Tabor, Charles "Bill" - 2003 - Football
- Tabor, Gerald "Hoopy" - 2000 - Basketball
- Tabor, William Jones - 2009 - Golf
- Terry, Melissa "Gander" - 1999 - Football
- Thurman, Greg - 2002 - Basketball
- Towery, Carlisle - 1998 - Basketball
- Turley, Curtis - 1999 - Basketball
- Van Hooser, Carroll - 1998 - Football
- Wheeler, Floyd "Rip" - 2010 - Baseball
- Willoughby, James - 2012 - Track
- Woodall, Deller E. - 1998 - Football
- Woodall, Jerry - 2004 - Football
- Wring, Tommy - 2002 - Basketball
- 1945 Marion High Football Team - 2008
- 1963 CC High Football Team - 2008
- 1985 CC High Football Team - 2000
- 1942 Marion High Football Team - 2015