

Interview with Coach John Hasten
Subject: The History of Marshall Football
Interviewers: Dan Gard, Chris Bradford, and Michael Stepp.

Question: What year did you begin coaching?

Answer: My first year out of college was my 1974-1975 school year and I was at Hutsonville coaching junior high basketball, baseball and track so I was at Hutsonville for two years then I came to Marshall because I wanted to coach football.

Question: What years were most successful for you at Marshall High School?

Answer: Wow! That is a tough question because there is many ways to value to view success. Ok, I think that uh, there is three ways to view success or two ways and there is three years I would mention. Ok, if you are going to go by total wins that you have in a season in 1987 we won 9 games were 9-3 that year and got to the final eight teams in the state 2A. If you want to talk about teams that have pulled together and made turn around and done well there are two years 1983, and 1997 that I would say was the most successful years that I have had in both of those year we started out something like 1-3 or in 1983 I believe we started out 1-2 and then played Cumberland the fourth date and defeated them but uh, we were young and inexperienced and developing and we ended up beating Casey at the end of the season on the ninth date and win the conference and go to the playoffs, in a team that everyone wrote off. This past year in 97 we started out 1-3 everybody writes us off as nothing we come back and win the conference think that probably in three really tough ball games and I think that is uh. Success is something that you make out of it and I think those years you would have to say was successful or most successful.

Question: Have you ever received any special awards during your coaching career?

Answer: I don't seek awards I got a plaque in '96 for winning being part of the hundredth game of football that we have won since I have been head coach I don't seek for I don't necessarily want the attention the attention should be on the players the players are the ones that go on the field and play I am just fortunate enough to be there and try and help uh, I joined coaching associations because I think that it might help me become a better coach uh, I am just happy to be where I am and what I am doing.

Question: Did you coach more then one school sport, and if so, what were they?

Answer: I have always outside of probably two years when I first became athletic director in 1980 I coached more than one sport every year. When I was coaching in junior high it was always junior high basketball and track uh, assistant football when I was here at Marshall I coached junior high baseball two years at Hutsonville since I have been in the high school I have been head baseball coach for a couple of years before Bill Buzlin took it over and that was before Mr. Wilson took it over I have helped coach girls softball I have helped coach girls

basketball and I have been a track coach for a long long time mostly shot and disc and middle distance and distance running so I have always worked more than one sport. The main reason I got into teaching when I got into teaching because I wanted to coach I liked working with young people that are dedicated toward a goal it's fun so I like doing it.

Question: What sport did you enjoy coaching the most and why?

Answer: Ok, I think that uh, I would say there is a lot of likes I enjoy coaching football I really enjoy coaching football probably the most just as not even probably as the most because of the companionship and the comradery that the young people have the guys having to pull together to play it is the ultimate team sport because if I don't have a lineman you can't do your job either and you never touch a football and he has to make a lot of decisions with the football but you are just as important as he is because he can't do his job without you doing yours and it take a defense end that can make a pass rush that forces teams to change what they are doing so that the defense can work together it is 11 people working together more so than any other sport. In basketball you can have one guy that can score all the points and can win the game and he can get the ball and go down the floor and do the game himself I saw a kid do it you know but in football one guy cant play the game it is a team thing and everybody has to pull together and I love that part enjoy track in the spring because it is so relaxed and everybody is working for themselves at that point and I think that for those kids that are not real talented in dribbling a ball or catching a pass or whatever they can still be very talented in track and I like that part.

Question: Who were some of your best athletes?

Answer: Gosh you guys ask questions that could come from so many different ways if you want to talk about thinking processes and being at the right spots at the right time and all the different positions you have in football uh, boy that is tough Dan you have been one of the best blockers I have got probably the best pulling guards I have ever had you can pull and kick out and do some stuff and your speed and size at defensive end I know you are one of the best defense ends we have ever had and Michael broke all the records in throwing the ball and, but the key to Michael is dedication work and thinking that put you in the position that you are at right now you guys are some of the best players as a group we have ever had. Coach Johnson was an all-state linebacker for me excellent hitter and um probably the best one I have ever had as a true linebacker with pass coverage and everything. The best tight end probably I have ever had was Dan Flowers 6' 4" 200lb tightend was all-state could catch the ball in traffic and run over people. He ran the 300-meter hurdlers in track uh and was all-state. I was fortunate to have several people who were all-state. Denny Morris didn't catch as many passes as interceptions as Jeff Dailey but was probably every bit as good as defensive back as Jeff Dailey and Jeff Dailey was all-state. Denny was in the right spot at the right time probably a better hitter than Jeff Dailey was. So we have had some awfully good kids who have gone through. But I don't think that a football team is based on individuals I think it is based on group work and the success of the individual is based on the success of the group.

Question: When did Marshall High School sports begin?

Answer: Football began in Marshall High School in 1897 and I know that from a plaque on the wall in the cafeteria that said "The Fifty Years of Football" from the 1897 team to the 1947 team. And actually the '47 team was the fifty-first year fifty years before them and they were starting the next 50. So I know that I do know that, I don't know when basketball started for Marshall High School. There have been some interesting things in football. You go back when one year when the coach decided that no one was working hard enough and cancelled the season back in the early 1900s, there has been a lot of things like that. The most successful year of football or decade in football was the 1920s where we won about 70% of our games. The least successful year was probably the 1950s where they barely won about 50% of their games. Marshall then got on a rebound in the 60s and 70s and we have been doing pretty well on the average.

Question: When was the football field constructed?

Answer: The first team that played on the new field was the 1958 team and they were undefeated I think 8-0. The superintendent at the time was Charley Bush and its named Bush field now. During the '57 year while they were building it and working on it we played all away games and uh something like 6-2 was our record. They practiced at the fairgrounds in the inside of the track and uh when they got it built in 1958 they were the first team to play on it. Before then they played just behind the old building kind of where the Junior High and the yellow shed that the custodians use, I think it was in that area.

Question: How do you feel that Marshall High School sports have changed over the years?

Answer: When I was in high school I was the leading receiver I caught 16 passes my junior year and 16 passes my senior year and the next closest guy caught about 4 or 5 nobody threw the ball back then, now throwing the ball is something you have to do to be successful. I still think that you have to have a running game to set up the throw, but you got to be able to throw when you need to, to me that has been the big change in football. In the early years for the most part it was a running game the types of offenses they ran was just running. But lately it we have been following the college ranks and its like fast-break basketball if you're behind by 5 points in basketball and there is just one minute left on the clock you got to push the ball up the floor and score. And in football it's the same way you got to be able to throw when you're behind so the style. If you have got to throw when you're behind throw when your ahead or throw when you're getting ahead so you have those skills for when you need it when you're behind. And so you have those skills for when you need it when you're behind. And so passing seemed to become more and more a part of football.

Question: What do you see in the future for Marshall football?

Answer: I see some good things I think that uh, we are kind of on a rebound I want to say this from right here uh, this season was a good season the season before wasn't quite as good and the season before that was terrible ok, the season before that was our fourth year in the playoffs thing run in cycles and uh, when you guys were freshmen you know we didn't have a very good season and we were 2-7 and uh, while we were in some games part of the time I just never thought we were in sink on things I think that uh, what I seen over the past few years is more

basketball and just playing track but people that are trying to stay in shape all year around even if they are playing more then one sport or if they are playing one people that are willing to put the time and effort into work to be good I am seeing more and more of that we did not have that for awhile uh, everybody basically just wanted to show up and play and be happy to have the uniform on but I am seeing more and more dedication if that continues we will see some good things out of Marshall football uh, I think that it is something that we need to see continue in Marshall football.

Question: Did you play sports in high school and if so what were they?

Answer: I was a three year starter on the football team uh, I played all four years was a three year starter uh, my freshmen year I played one varsity play and recovered a fumble and it was one of those deals where the only reason I recovered a fumble was because I was playing linebacker and some running back just run up my front side and ran down my back side and left me laying on the ground and the guy behind me hit him and he fumbled and it fell in my arms but I got the football a star on my helmet! I started for three years at offensive guard and defensive tackle an uh, my junior year I moved to defensive end and uh, as far as our defense would be considered and I was a tight end for two years and uh, I played basketball for four years. I ran track we did not have baseball in high school I played baseball in the summer but we had open gym everyday in the summer and we alternated between football and basketball every other day we stayed in shape all year round the big difference between now and then there is a whole lot more for kids to do now then there was no Nintendo when I was back in high school you just did not have the choices that kids have in Terre Haute and things maybe you went to see a movie on Friday night or on Saturday night but you did not have all these things I feel like uh, now there is a lot of choices for kids and uh, sometimes they choose not to play sports but uh, are numbers are still good, I can remember that in high school we had 45 kids out for football we have average 50 for the last 18 years and that is a pretty good number we are staying pretty steady kids are coming out and playing.

Question: What do you like and dislike about coaching?

Answer: Sometimes I feel like I do everything but coach there is a lot of things you have to do from preparing the field to paperwork involved and all this kind of stuff and once in awhile the last thing you get to do is go out and coach people on the practice field. I like practices, I think practices, whatever you do in practices and develop in practice you eventually are able to do in the games I think that games shouldn't be any big surprises and at the point when I don't like to go to practices is when I quit coaching ok, I like to go to practice.

Question: Do you have any interesting stories to tell us about your coaching career?

Answer: Oh my, I can tell you about Coach Johnson hitting the owl on the way home from the Sullivan game one night uh, smashed the window in the bus a great-horned owl people called him "hootie hoot" most of the time the rest of the year because he killed an owl uh, I can remember some wonderful games were games that people say we shouldn't have won, I can remember some heartbreaking losses that a fumble at the goal line at the last seconds or something but uh, I can also remember the seniors shaking hands after their last ball game. I

can remember a lot of kids who have graduated that come back just to stand on the sideline because they want to be part of it again those are all things that are important because "Once a Lion Always a Lion".