

LEE BRIDGES

Coach Bridges has had a 37-year career as a coach, teacher, and athletic director. He has made a tremendous impact on thousands of students, student-athletes, and coaches, helping to cultivate leaders in our communities, military, churches, and government. Many of his former students have pursued careers as lawyers, doctors, soldiers, military officers, pastors, and businessmen, attributing some of their achievements to his leadership, tutelage, and role-modeling.

The mark of a great coach is teaching in all aspects of life: on the field, off the field, and in the classroom. Coach Bridges has won numerous coaching awards, led teams to State Championships, and reached the State Semi-Finals. As a track coach, he claimed multiple Regional Championships and guided several runners to individual awards at the State Track Meet. In 2005, he served as the head coach of the THSCA All-Star South Football Team. Additionally, Coach Bridges was named Teacher of the Year at Reagan High School while teaching English.

Moreover, Coach Bridges has been a guiding force and role model not only for students but also for the coaches he worked with and competed against. In his roles as the head football coach at five different high schools (Austin HS, Killeen HS, SA Taft, SA Stevens HS, Leander HS), he consistently mentored assistant coaches, nurturing their growth into head coaches and leaders. Nine of his former assistants have succeeded as head coaches, including Drew Sanders, Lee Penland, Sam Jones, Darryl Hemphill, Chip Mayfield, Conrad Hernandez, Greg Felux, John Contrucci, and Steve Merka.

Coach Bridges was an unwavering advocate for the THSCA, emphasizing its significance to all his coaches. He insisted on their membership, participation in regional meetings, and attendance at the THSCA Convention in summers. Serving as a Senior Director for Region 8, he was also nominated for the presidency of the THSCA. Three of his assistant coaches, who later became head coaches, served as Senior Directors at the THSCA. This commitment showcases his dedication and leadership within the coaching profession's most important organization.

Coach Bridges hails from the small town of Lampasas, Texas. Following his graduation, he attended The University of Texas, where he walked on to the football team. He remains happily married to his high school sweetheart Connie, also a UT graduate, who dedicated 38 years as a master math teacher and Academic Dean, supporting and coordinating the family's transitions from school to school. Katie Bridges, his accomplished daughter, is a devoted coach's kid and avid football fan, graduating from the University of Texas in 2011.

KEN COOK

Ken Cook coached for a year at Groesbeck Jr. High School and then spent two years at Carroll Jr. and Carroll High School. Ken went back to his hometown of Sanger, where he was the

director and head coach for boys' basketball, head baseball coach, varsity football assistant, and implemented and coached the golf program at Sanger High School.

In 1979, he began a very long and successful coaching career at Carroll High School in Southlake, Texas, where he has been the Athletic Coordinator, UIL Coordinator, and head boys' basketball coach. In the year 2002-03, he served as the Interim Athletic Director. At Carroll, he has been a teacher, the head boys' basketball coach, and head baseball coach for six years and a defensive coordinator for seventeen years. Each team he has coached, be it baseball, football, or basketball, has consistently been district, regional, and state champions. He retired from Carroll in 2003.

As a coach at Southlake Carroll, he has coached four All-Star games and holds five state championships (3 in football as the Defensive Coordinator in '88, '92, and '93, 1 in basketball as Head Coach '93, and 1 in baseball as Head Coach '82). He was also the Interim Athletic Director during Carroll High School's Football State Championship in 2001. In 2002-03, Ken was the Past President of the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches (TABC). He has served on numerous committees, been honored as the TABC State Coach of the year in 1993, and received other awards that are too numerous to mention.

Ken was elected to the THSCA Board of Directors in the summer of 2000 and served for four years. Ken then retired/rehired as the Head Girls' Basketball Coach and Girls' Athletic Coordinator in the Eagle Mountain/Saginaw I.S.D. at Boswell High School. In 2015, Ken set a career-winning record as a head basketball coach of 728 wins in 40 years as a Head Basketball Coach.

In 2015, Ken retired again. He then took on a part-time position with Eagle Mountain Athletic Department as a Part-Time Assistant Athletic Director. In that position, he oversees three football stadiums, handles the UIL paperwork for the district, deals with some facilities issues, and is in charge of all playoff games hosted by all sports at Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD. In his spare time, he plays quite a bit of golf at the Resort at Eagle Mountain Golf Club.

Ken and his wife, Kerry, live in the Resort on Eagle Mountain Lake. Kerry is also a teacher; she has taught seventh-grade math at Carroll for 26 years. She is now teaching in her 16th year of 7th and 8th-grade Math at Creekview Middle School in the Eagle Mountain/Saginaw ISD. Their son, Casey, received his Master's Degree from Oklahoma State and is in Houston working as a financial auditor. He is married to Krista and has two children, Kai and Kaine Cook. Their daughter, Courtney, also graduated from Oklahoma State University and is now working for a pharmaceutical company in Kansas City, Kansas. She is married to Derek Blau and has two children, Blakely and Everly Blau.

CHRIS KOETTING

Koetting was head football coach at Canadian from 2010 to 2022, and those 13 seasons were the greatest high school football dynasty in Texas Panhandle history. Koetting came to Canadian from Hereford in 2003 as offensive coordinator. The 2007 team, the first to go from a ground-oriented attack to a wide open one-back five-receiver set, won the school's first Class 2A state title with a 15-1 record.

Two seasons later, Koetting became the head coach of what would become the most remarkable sustained success in Panhandle football history. In that span, the Wildcats were 165-24, an 87.3 winning percentage. His teams won 121 of their last 136 games until his retirement in April.

In that span, Canadian won additional state championships in 2014, 2015 and 2020. The 2015 team that finished 16-0 and defeated Refugio, 62-20, for the state title was widely considered the greatest Class 2A team in state history.

His three state titles tie him with Blair Cherry of Amarillo High for the most in the history of the area. Canadian teams weren't loaded with superior college talent, but had a system supervised and taught by Koetting that often confused opponents and maximized player strengths.

With five other state semifinal and one state title appearance, just a small break on several occasions could have added to the three state titles in Koetting's career. His remarkable 49-10 playoff record are the most postseason wins by any coach in Texas Panhandle history.

He and wife Rosemary have three grown children – a daughter and two sons.

MEL MAXFIELD

Mel Maxfield has been in the coaching business for 40 years. He has been the head coach and athletic director for four different districts. He was at Forney High School (1987-2000), Burleson High School (2001-2009), Amarillo High School (2010-2018), and Monahans High School (2018). Coach Max is also noted for his expertise in the heavy "run game", as he patented the Wing-T offense for high school football.

At Forney High School, Coach Maxfield had the record of 129 wins and 43 losses with 1 tie. He holds the title of the winningest football coach in Forney ISD history. While serving the Jackrabbits, he guided his team to 5 undefeated regular seasons, 9 District Championships, 7 Bi-District Championships, 2 Area Championships, 2 Regional Championships, 1 State Qtr Final, 1 State Semi-Final Championship. In total, the Jackrabbits qualified for the playoffs in 11 out of 15 seasons.

In 2000, Coach Max accepted the Head Coach position at Burleson High School. He coached the Elks for 8 seasons. In a very short period of time, Max flipped the program. He led BHS to 5 playoff appearances and one District Championship.

In 2010, Max moved to coach the Amarillo High Sandies. Coach Maxfield found himself on the winning side of every season. Maxfield posted a 65-29 record during his time. Maxfield took the Sandies to the postseason in all eight of his seasons at Amarillo High School. In back-to-back 2012 and 2013 seasons, Maxfield took the team to the third round of the Texas high school football playoffs. His record credited him as the winningest coach in the Panhandle area of Texas.

Mel achieved over 250 career wins making him one of the most winning coaches in Texas high school football history. Mel was a dedicated member of THSCA, winner of the 2006 Nike Coach of the Year award, winner of multiple UIL Coach of the Year awards, and recipient of the Texas Sports Hall of Fame Tom Landry Award in 2016.

JACK MURPHY

Jack Murphy, a graduate of Chapel Hill High School, distinguished himself as a three-year letterman, earning recognition as an all-district linebacker and team captain. His athletic journey continued at Tyler Junior College, where he excelled as an all-conference tackle and earned a spot on the Junior College All-American Team. Following his tenure at Tyler, he transitioned to Tulsa University, showcasing his football prowess over three impactful years.

Murphy's coaching odyssey commenced in 1961 at Tulsa as a graduate assistant before assuming roles at Clarendon High School and subsequently becoming the head junior high coach at Judson Longview. However, it was in 1965 that Murphy embarked on his enduring legacy at Gladewater High School, initially serving as an assistant football coach before assuming the mantle of head coach in 1969.

A piece in the Tyler Morning News in October 1995 commemorated Murphy's achievements, noting his versatility in coaching winless teams, guiding state semifinalist squads, and everything in between. In pursuit of his 200th career victory at Gladewater, Murphy's dedication shone brightly.

Murphy's coaching journey at Gladewater spans 27 illustrious years, marked by remarkable milestones. From 1982 to 1992, his teams secured playoff berths for 11 consecutive seasons, reaching the quarterfinals on five occasions and clinching 38 consecutive district games.

Beyond wins and losses, Murphy's coaching ethos centers on molding character. His focus extends beyond the game, emphasizing life lessons. Teaching young men to exhibit class,

respect, and integrity is his ultimate goal. 'They grow up and they become something or somebody,' reflects Murphy on his coaching philosophy.

In endorsement of Coach Murphy, his brother, Don Murphy, affirms: 'Jack's unwavering dedication as a member of the Texas High School Coaches Association for 35 years and his tenure as head football coach at Gladewater High School speak volumes. His accomplishments rival those of other esteemed coaches previously honored.'

Oscar Cripps, sharing a two-decade-long association with Murphy, lauds his leadership, both in coaching and in shaping young minds: 'Jack's willingness to engage in discussions about football, mentoring kids, and life reflects his dedication to both the sport and the development of future outstanding citizens.'

Jack Murphy's contributions extend beyond the field; he served on the THSCA Board of Directors from 1984 to 1988.