

# Alabama Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame



## **NOLAN ATKINS** **Class of 2003**

*“In Recognition of a Lifetime of Outstanding Achievement in the game of Baseball.  
The State of Alabama will forever be in your debt.”*

Coach Nolan Atkins was born August 8, 1936, in Webster County, Mississippi. He graduated from S.D. Lee High School of Columbus, Mississippi, and earned his college degree from Mississippi State University. He later earned a master’s degree from Livingston University (now The University of West Alabama).

He spent the first four years of his coaching career as an assistant at Alcorn County, Mississippi; Robins High School of Tampa, Florida; and Escambia County High School of Atmore, Alabama. In 1966 he moved to Sweet Water, Alabama, and was named head football coach and athletic director at Sweet Water High School in Marengo County.

Coach Atkins also served as Sweet Water High School’s baseball coach, winning six state championships and finishing runner-up another time. His baseball record stands at 130-40. In 1982, he was head coach of the Class 1A State Champions in both baseball and football.

Along with his head baseball title and championships, Coach Atkins football record at Sweet Water High School defies all the standard clichés for athletic success. Although there would be two one-year interruptions in Coach Atkins’s tenure, by 1969 his football team played in the state finals, falling short to Excel. Under his reign, the football team at Sweet Water High School would go on to win four state championships in 1978, 1979, 1982, and 1986. They were runner-up teams in 1969, 1975, and 1984.

His career record in football is 278-73-5. He has had six undefeated teams, including the 1978 state championship team with 13 wins and the 1979 state championship team with 14 wins.

Coach Atkins has four times been named state Class 1A Coach of the Year. He was President of the Central Board of Control of the Alabama High School Athletic Association from 1989-1990 and was inducted into the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame in 1991. He retired from coaching in 1991, and in 2003, the football stadium at Sweet Water High School was named “Atkins Stadium/Victory Field” in his honor.

**Inducted January 17, 2003**