

Alabama Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame



AL SMITH **Class of 2021**

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

The late Al Smith was one of the most popular and successful coaches in the history of Madison County athletics. Born and raised in Charleston, Mississippi, he attended Northwest Junior College in Mississippi and, following a two-year stint in the U.S. Army, graduated from Mississippi State University in 1952. He later received a Master's Degree from Montevallo in 1972. As a pitcher at Northwest Mississippi Junior College, he compiled a 6-1 record and led his team to the state junior college championship. He was one of the top pitchers at Mississippi State in 1951 and 1952. Pitching in his final game at State, he carried the Bulldogs to the Southeastern Conference championship.

Smith began his career in education as an elementary principal and later a teacher and coach in Mississippi before coming to the Huntsville area in 1963. He started the first football program at Madison Academy in 1967 and enjoyed much success there from 1963-1967. Smith then moved to Westlawn Middle School for one year before heading to Grissom High School where he started the baseball program. Smith stayed at Grissom through 1975 before moving on to Butler High School. Coach Smith won numerous city championships at Grissom and Butler, and his 1985 Butler team won the baseball state championship. His 1979 Butler team was the State Champion Runner-up.

Smith garnered numerous awards including being named the city coach of the year eight times. Coach Smith is remembered as a beloved veteran coach who was interested in developing winning teams but was more interested in helping his players cope with life beyond the baseball diamond. "I do not believe there has ever been a coach in the city of Huntsville who was more beloved and respected than Al Smith," former Grissom football coach Larrie Robinson once said. Al Smith coached baseball for more than 37 years, the last 27 of those years were spent coaching within the Huntsville City limits.

Inducted January 16, 2021