

Jimmy Ogle
Personal Contributor

It's amazing that there is a walking encyclopedia about Memphis and Shelby County, and that he has been recognized by the Shelby County Board of Commissioners as the third-ever Shelby County Historian. But what's even further amazing is that Jimmy Ogle would not have learned how to read if it weren't for the Commercial Appeal sports page, according to his sister.

Jimmy's knowledge of the city was born out of his years-long labor of love working on the Memphis sports scene. His athletic background began as a child, but his time with the Memphis Park Commission sparked his desire to learn more about the city.

Jimmy's connection with the Memphis Park Commission began in 1979 and ran through the 1990s. He played a pivotal role in coordinating citywide special events, especially for kids during the summer. Jimmy helped with the Commission's Mobile Recreation Program and assisted in developing 5K and 10K races across the city.

During the time with the Commission, Jimmy also covered high school football and basketball, serving as a public address announcer in various stadiums and a newspaper stringer for the Commercial Appeal. He added the roles of statistician and spotter for college and pro events and became a member of the Memphis Tigers and Grizzlies table crews.

In 1977, when he was the scoring calligrapher in the press room of the Danny Thomas Memphis Classic, Jimmy made an enlarged scorecard for Al Geiberger, who recorded the first-ever 59 on the PGA TOUR. Jimmy is also the archivist for the Overton Park Junior Open and provided the names of all Grand Champions (boys and girls) since 1947 in the recent addition of the Memphis Golf History brick walk by the clubhouse.

Jimmy's love for sports started at a young age, playing on neighborhood playgrounds and gyms. By high school — where he attended MUS — Jimmy had zoned in on basketball. In his senior season, Jimmy led the Owls in scoring and assists and was named to the Sport Writers' All-State second team. Inspired by the schoolwide spirit squad, "The Buzzards," Jimmy and his teammates finished the 1969-70 regular season undefeated under legendary coach Jerry Peters.

Jimmy then played at Southwestern — now Rhodes College — from 1970-73. He set the single-game freshman scoring record that still stands today.

During his college days, Jimmy transitioned onto the Memphis sports scene. His first job was as a bowling machine mechanic — yes, you heard that right — at the First Baptist Church recreation program. It was there that his decades-long association with Memphis sports began.

Please welcome to the Hall of Fame, as a personal contributor — Jimmy Ogle.