

Sports



1969 Sunshine High State Champs Honored at Media Day

GREG FISCHER
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"He's the one that groomed us into being the baseball players that we really were," Alex 'Cannon' Ambeau, who played 3rd base, said.

He was speaking of Head Coach Gerald Trent, who took a team of segregated high school students at Sunshine High School to two state championships in 1968-69. They won in 1969.

On February 16 at East Iberville High School's baseball field, those men were honored. It was an event for the Tigers baseball and softball teams coined "Annual Media Day," but it was so much more.

Coach of the Tigers baseball team Moroni "Mo" Pointer could not hold back tears during an interview and needed a moment to regroup.

"Most baseball teams throw out a first pitch, and we try to honor a dignitary each year," Pointer said. "This year we'll honor the 1969 state champs . . . It's emotional, I love it . . . I know baseball is a

pastime sport, but this is really big to honor these guys. I don't think they've been honored since they won and moved to a new school."

Sunshine High School's Pitcher McClinton "Sleepy" Pooler threw out the first pitch.

Moreover, Pointer said that the 2019 team is young, but they have been working hard. "It's going to be a battle for us," he said.

No one has won a state championship at E. Iberville since the 1969 Sunshine High School baseball team. Some members such as Asst. Coach Isaac Redditt have passed away.

Redditt's former spouse, Shirley Redditt was there to take his place for the day. She said it has been at least ten years since she's been to the field. Her kids are grown up. And around that time, her husband passed.

"It feels good," Redditt said. "It brings back a whole lot of good memories."

East Iberville principal Calvin Nicholas was there in support. He said it follows the school's motto "Be Legendary."



Members of the 2019 Tiger baseball team honor the 1969 State Champs as they enter the field.
—PHOTOS BY GREG FISCHER



Shirley Redditt, wife of deceased coach Isaac Redditt stands next to Coach Mo Pointer.

E. Iberville only girls basketball team remaining in parish

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The 2018-19 girls basketball teams all ended their seasons but one, the East Iberville team. The Tigers will play the Haynesville Golden Tornado, from just below the Arkansas line on February 21. On Monday night, E. Iberville inched past Delta Charter 32-30.

Haynesville (1A-1) finished 17-5-1 in the regular season and are coming off a 68-40 victory over Logansport in the regional.

Next, the Plaquemine Devils (4A-6) fell hard to Benton in the regional playoff 67-47. But the St. John Eagles (1A-6) fell harder to Houma Christian in the regional, 26-68. Moreover, White Castle lost to Delhi in the 1A regional, 61-73.

"We're expecting great things," Nicholas said. "When I got here, participation was key. Communicate, cooperate, and participate. We're straight up, legendary."

Reginald Grace, Sr., who played 1st base agreed that there is a role-model element involved. Grace Sr., who works as a counselor, went on to play 1st base at Natchitoches.

"When we were playing it was during segregation, and then in 1970 we started integrating the schools and started mixing it up," Grace, Sr. said. "But we were an all-black team in an all-black association, the LIALO."

"I knew I wasn't going to play, but all I wanted was a uniform," William "Bill" Smith said. "These guys were fabulous. Melvin [Craig] just had a natural curve."

"We were playing in '69 and the next year the schools integrated,



School leaders Felicia Griffon, Calvin Nicholas, and Ron Lejeune pose together for a photograph.

and we didn't have a team because of that. All kind of crazy stuff was going on. We couldn't play against caucasian kids at the time, at the school. We played all the time, anyway. It was a big change for the

whole state.

"We couldn't enroll at LSU. We would play at Grambling or Southern. Anyway, we lived through all that. There wasn't nothing to it. Made everybody better, I think. Definitely made the country better."

"There's no animosity or hard feelings," he said. "We just showed up to school and had a good time."

Lastly, Principal Jillian Dotson from MSA East threw the first pitch to honor the 2019 E. Iberville Girls Softball Team. Once the Sunshine High School State Champs were honored, the players from both the baseball and softball teams had a batting exhibition to raise funds for the teams.

Many were in attendance.



The men of Sunshine High's State Championship Baseball Team.