



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Wilbur Braithwaite to Receive NFHS Award of Merit

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Howard

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (May 23, 2006) — Wilbur Braithwaite, a highly successful high school boys basketball coach in Utah for 37 years and one of the leading contributors to the success of the NFHS Coaches' Quarterly magazine, has been selected as the 2006 recipient of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Award of Merit.

Braithwaite, a 1989 inductee in the NFHS National High School Hall of Fame, will receive the Award of Merit June 28 during the luncheon at the 87th annual NFHS Summer Meeting at the Marriott World Center in Orlando, Florida.

The Award of Merit, which has now been presented to 36 individuals through the years, is the highest honor an individual can receive from the NFHS. The award recognizes significant contributions to the NFHS and interscholastic activity programs at the national level. In addition, criteria include contributions to the high school community at the state and national levels, as well as an individual's character and integrity.

Braithwaite, 79, retired in 1988 after 37 years as basketball coach at Manti (Utah) High School. He continued to coach tennis through the 2004-05 season, representing a 53-year career coaching in that sport. During his 37 years at the basketball helm, Braithwaite's teams compiled a 534-267 record. His 1966 team won the Utah Class B state title, and his teams finished second in the Class 2A tournament three other times – 1977, 1981 and 1983. His tennis teams won 11 state championships and finished second nine times and third on five other occasions.

More important than victories to Braithwaite was his commitment to teaching young people. After receiving his master's degree from the University of Michigan in 1951, Braithwaite was offered a teaching and coaching position at Utah State University, his alma mater. However, he turned down that offer to fulfill a promise to the Manti superintendent to return to his birthplace, hometown and high

school to coach the school's basketball team. Amazingly, in 37 years as a high school basketball coach, Braithwaite never received a technical foul.

Braithwaite was named coach of the year in 1966 and was president of the Utah High School Basketball Coaches Association in 1983-84. He received a coaching award in 1987-88 from the Utah High School Activities Association (UHSAA) and was honored by the Utah High School Athletic Directors Association in 1982 with its distinguished service award. In 1988, he was inducted into the Utah Summer Games Hall of Honor and was named 2A Coach of the Year by the UHSAA. In February 2002, Braithwaite had the honor of carrying the torch as it made its way through Manti en route to Salt Lake City for the Winter Olympics.

Braithwaite was a frequent clinic speaker and writer, with many of his articles focusing on sportsmanship and sports philosophy. Because of his background as an accomplished writer and poet, the NFHS selected Braithwaite as a charter member of the NFHS Coaches' Quarterly Publications Committee in 1996. From that time until his retirement from the committee last year, Braithwaite contributed approximately 30 articles to the magazine.

"The success of the NFHS Coaches' Quarterly during the past 10 years is due in large part to the contributions of Wilbur Braithwaite," said Bruce Howard, NFHS publications and communications director and editor of the NFHS Coaches' Quarterly. "His articles always show his profound wisdom about the coaching profession and have always been geared to help high school coaches improve not only as coaches, but as human beings. He is the ultimate gentleman, and the life lessons that he taught to hundreds and hundreds of student-athletes will be remembered even more than the victories."

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