

SPORTS



CAVALIER COACH – Dick Wilson, standing at extreme left in back row, is pictured with his Cavalier squad during the 1970s.

Soccer icon Dick Wilson passes

Noted politician/businessman, and my long-time friend, Leslie Miller, called recently to inform that Richard “Dick” Wilson was experiencing a serious health challenge. Then, he updated the news and said Wilson’s vital organs had shut down.

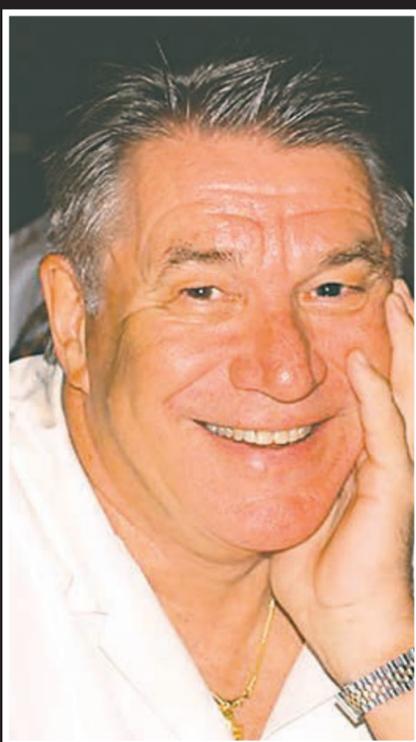
Of course, as I expected, the morning thereafter, he gave me the sad news. Wilson had died.

“Dick was an extraordinary man who came here from Canada to work and he became a part of the Bahamian landscape in a very special way. It was as if he was born and bred right here in The Bahamas. His focus was on helping others and doing all he could to make the Bahamian society better. In his own unique style, he meant more to The Bahamas than many who had the status of birth in this country,” said Miller as we reminisced about Wilson and lamented his departure into eternity.

Ironically, Miller, one of the great sports figures in the country’s history, did not relate to Wilson in that regard. He actually admitted knowing very little about Wilson’s gigantic role in enhancing the sport of soccer in The Bahamas. His kind and true words though, were a collective testimony to the overall quality of the man Dick Wilson and his worth to an adopted land.

As a player during the last portion of the Golden Era of Sports in the 1960s and 1970s, for McAlpine, and later as a player-coach for Cavalier, Wilson

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RICHARD “DICK” WILSON

was monumental. He brought a hard-nosed, competitive brand of play to The Bahamas, but he had tremendous respect and passion for the sport.

In observing Wilson through the years and having many conversations with him, I formed

the opinion, quite early actually, that he was too dedicated to soccer to do anything to taint the sport.

He had no concerns about making hard tackles or being on the receiving end of those, but only in the interest of good

competitive play. Wilson, gregarious sometimes, almost to a fault, was the best mate anyone could find.

He loved winning, hated to lose opportunities to succeed on the field, and that carried over to his professional life, especially

with Cavalier Construction, as a key figure on the many projects, the company delivered through the years. He had a lot to do with Cavalier being one of the hallmark construction companies in Bahamian history.

As comfortable and knowing as he was within his professional domain, though, I always felt that at least equally, he liked to be on a soccer field, playing and teaching. To the latter end, he did get a national opportunity to work with young aspiring players, officially.

For a period, Wilson was the National Soccer Coach of The Bahamas.

He operated from the heart of the inner city, the noted highly-visible R. M. Bailey Park in the capital island of New Providence. Daily, each afternoon with the exception of Sundays (sometimes, he engaged in special training on Saturdays), the energetic Wilson, by then, hobbling on terrible knees and ankles, could be seen imparting soccer knowledge to youngsters.

Wilson was actively involved in playing soccer and later teaching the game long after he should have just settled to become a spectator.

He once told me of the extent of deterioration on his body due to soccer.

“I should have quit the game before I came to The Bahamas. My legs were shot. But, I came and fell in love all over again with the sport and became en-

deared to the community and was delighted to be accepted as a part of the fraternity. I always wanted to give as much as I could to the development of soccer and the enhancement of members of the youth population who came to me for any sort of help, be it soccer or otherwise,” said Wilson.

That was his motto.

That’s how I will remember Richard “Dick” Wilson.

A nation stands indebted to him for his valiant contributions.



Sports Scope

by Fred Sturup

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Falcons force game three against Stingers

JAGUARS ADVANCE TO GBSSAA SENIOR BOYS’ CHAMPIONSHIP

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After falling behind in their best-of-three series with the Sunland Stingers, the Tabernacle Falcons managed to even the odds (1-1) this past Wednesday evening.

The Grand Bahama Secondary School Athletic Association: Derek Nesbitt/Obie Wilchcombe High School Basketball League’s senior boys’ semifinals continued at the Jack Hayward Gymnasium, as the defending champion Falcons took down the Stingers 62-51.

The Falcons were led by guard Ethan Munroe, and forwards Joshua Dames and Denardo Adderley. The trio combined for 45 points (15 points each) in the series tying game. The Stingers’ forward Rolante Knowles, however, turned in a game-high effort of 20 points in the loss.

Game three takes place tonight at 7:00 p.m. at the Jack Hayward Gymnasium.

The champs appeared focused from the opening tip. The Falcons held a 12-7 lead at the end of the first quarter sparked by the hot shooting of Munroe who totaled eight points in the opening stanza.

While the Falcons eventually built a 17-12 lead in the sec-



MAXIMUM EFFORT - Ethan Munroe, right, pictured as he utilizes a screen set by teammate Denardo Adderley (14) in the Tabernacle Falcons’ 62-51 win over the Sunland Stingers this past Wednesday night at the Jack Hayward Gymnasium.

(PHOTOS: SHAYNE STUBBS)

ond the Stingers managed to tie the game at 17 apiece halfway through. In the closing minutes of the second the Falcons’ full court press allowed them to build a 28-20 edge to lead at halftime.

The Falcons would lead by 12 points with five minutes to go in the third quarter, powered by some strong play from Adderley off the bench. The lead stood at 34-22 in favor of the Falcons at that point.

The Stingers, led by Knowles in that quarter attempted to mount a comeback and made it a single-digit deficit, with under three minutes to go in the third. The score stood at 39-33 for the Falcons with 2:17 left.

Still, Tabby went into the fourth with a 43-33 lead.

Although a Stingers three made it a 43-36 game the Falcons again crept out to a double-digit lead. The score stood at 50-36 with 5:47 left to tick away in the fourth.

Later, faced with a 56-40 deficit with under 2:30 remaining the Stingers slowly chipped away at the deficit. The Stingers later trailed 56-45 before a three-pointer by Knowles found the bottom of the net to make it a 56-48 game in favor of Tabby. Knowles was fouled on that shot and the subsequent free

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