



Jerry Acklen
Sportswriter – Contributor
Inducted 2017

Jerry Acklen first wrote about GPHS athletes in 1942, doubling as the Daily Courier sports editor while principal of Lincoln School. He continued to write about the Grants Pass Cavemen for the next 35 years.

Jerry's responsibilities varied for a few years (including serving as a sports correspondent for the Portland newspaper) until 1960, when he resumed his position at the sports desk of the Daily Courier, where writing about Caveman Athletics was his great passion. He was very proud of the Cavemen and not afraid to let that be known. Jerry always had something positive to say about Grants Pass athletes and coaches, and in turn, many past athletes and coaches have kind words to say about Jerry's concern for kids and support of coaches. During home football games for the Cavemen, Jerry could be found at the 50- yard line, taking stats for the team and preparing for tomorrow's Cavemen write-up. Jerry's dedication to Grants Pass athletics was something to marvel at. He rarely missed a football or basketball game, which meant many late night trips back from Klamath Falls, Roseburg, and Ashland – at a time when games started at 8:00 pm.

In addition to reporting the Friday night games, Jerry knew the rosters, the schedule, ticket information, stats – anything you wanted to know about the Cavemen – you could get from Jerry. He also kept the official stats for Caveman football for many years until he retired in 1976.

Jerry was also the author of a regular sports column "Ack Ack", "60 years of GPHS Football" and "The Life of Mel Ingram". After retiring from the sports editor position, Jerry was named the historical editor for the Daily Courier.

Jerry Acklen was also dedicated to the Josephine County Concert Association, served as the head usher at Newman United Methodist church (for decades), and distinguished himself in his efforts to find a cure for diabetes. Jerry established the Jerry Acklen Diabetes Association and was the top fundraiser 1983-1986 in the annual Diabetes Association Bike Plus fundraiser, even riding on a stationary bike with his right foot taped to the pedal, to raise funds while recovering from a stroke.

Jerry came to know many athletes and coaches through the years. Those that knew him not only respected him, but many regarded him as a friend.

Jerry Acklen was proud of the Cavemen and proud to be a Caveman!