



Napoleon B. Cobb

April 4, 1943 - January 31, 2024

Napoleon Bonaparte Cobb, the only child of Napoleon and Katherine Cobb, both of whom preceded him in death, was born April 4, 1943, in Atlanta, Georgia. He was a graduate of Henry McNeal Turner High School in Atlanta, Georgia. After high school, he attended Tennessee State University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education. It was at Tennessee State University that he became a member of the fraternity Kappa Alpha Psi. He completed his Master of Science degree from George Williams University in Chicago, Illinois. He attended Victory Christian Center in Decatur, Georgia.

Coach Cobb's life was dedicated to education and track and field. He began his teaching and coaching career at DuSable High School in Chicago. After three years in Chicago, he moved to Berkeley, California where he taught at Berkeley High School. He coached football and track at Berkeley High. While in California, he watched and learned from the legendary "Speed City" program of San Jose State University.

He returned to Georgia where he taught Physical Education and coached football and track and field at Gordon High School (now McNair Middle School) in Dekalb County. At Gordon, his track and field teams earned 3 State Championships in 1975, 1976, and 1978 – triple crowning – winning county, region, and state those years.

Coach Cobb moved from Gordon High to join the collegiate ranks of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. Eleven years at the “House” witnessed the coming and going of several All-American and World-Class athletes.

As fate would have it, he returned to Dekalb County and landed at Southwest Dekalb High School. County Championships, State Championships, and National acclaim along with many broken records were a consistent part of Coach Cobb’s track program at Southwest.

Not only were Coach Cobb’s athletes successful, but their over 90% graduation rate was a testimony to the caliber of the program and the level of dedication and respect required to remain in the program.

He is the only coach to win 4 or more State Championships in AAAA according to modern record books. During the 2000 Olympic games, he became the first coach to ever have 2 former high school teammates become Olympic medalists on the same Olympic team. Coach Cobb helped support and develop these Olympic athletes for their events in the 2000 Olympic games in Sydney, Australia and the 2004 Olympics games in Athens, Greece which produced gold and silver medals.

In 2002, Coach Cobb became the only coach in NCAA history to have 3 track athletes to run on a state championship team together (1997), graduate high school, and receive their degrees from the University of South Carolina at the same time (2002).

Within his more than 20-year span at Southwest Dekalb High School, more young men and women were sent to colleges and universities on track scholarships than any other high school in the state of Georgia.

Coach Cobb has received numerous awards over the years. He humbly accepted each as if it was his first. He was voted Georgia High School Athletics Track and Field Coach of the Year 10 times, honored by the National Track and Field Association as the Southeastern Regional Track

and Field Coach of the Year, selected as Atlanta Track Club's Coach of the Year 3 times, recognized by the United States Olympic Committee as the personal coach for an Olympic athlete, inducted into the Southwest DeKalb High School Hall of Fame, and inducted into the Georgia Athletic Coaches Hall of Fame. Coach Cobb's impeccable dedication to the sport of track and field was evident to all.

After more than 30 years of teaching Health and Physical Education, coaching more than 25 years at the high school level, and 14 years as an instructor and head coach at Morehouse College, Coach Cobb retired.

Coach Cobb was a devoted teacher, coach, and mentor. He was known to hold practices ALL the time and expect the BEST from his athletes. If Coach Cobb was not in the gym teaching Physical Education or Health classes, he could be found on the track. If he was not in either place, he could be found making "Cobb Juice," watching film, or giving personalized training to his athletes. He was known to reach deep into his pockets to help students and athletes alike. He was an inspiration, leader, and father-figure to many.

Coach Cobb was a committed husband and father. He was preceded in death by his wife of 28 years, Pauline Cox Cobb. From this union, they bore four children.

He leaves behind to cherish his memory: his wife, Barbara; five children: Katanya Cobb, Shangaleza Cobb, Napoleon Cobb, Jabari Cobb (Serrena), and Jan Franklin; four grandchildren: Pauline D. Cobb, Jonathan Cobb, Kenneth Franklin, and Allison Franklin; two great grandchildren: Zipporah and Yashara; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

FEB **10**. 12:30 PM (ET)

New Mercies Christian Church
4000 Five Forks Trickum Rd SW
Lilburn, GA 30047
(770) 925-8600

Tribute Wall



“Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Homes & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Napoleon B. Cobb

 Tribute Video

Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Homes & Crematory, Inc. - February 06, 2024
at 04:41 PM



“ Our sincere condolences to the family of the great Coach Cobb. I met Coach Cobb when in college I ran against his amorphous teams. They were strong and represented his trading acumen. Fast forward 25 + years and my daughters Erin and Kia runs for Southwest Dekalb High. The girls team wins 3 straight State titles and more after her graduation. What a ride! Her coaches Terrell and Anderson, were strong followers of the Cobb training program he made sure it was run his winning way. Thanks for feeding so much success into my child and all the kids in Dekalb, many who may only have had him as a strong male role model. My friend, my frat brother, rest in peace. Erik, Trina, Erin, Kia, Carmen Jackson family

*Erik Jackson and family
School*



Erik Jackson - February 15, 2024 at 09:59 AM

KC

“ Coach was more than a friend but we are brothers for life. We were also roommates on so many track and football road trips. He was a competitor who knew how to use the video we created to get excellent results from his student athletes.

Ken Cartwright, Video Coach

Ken Cartwright - February 09, 2024 at 07:11 PM

CT

“ Charles and Gwen Touchstone planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Napoleon B. Cobb.

Charles and Gwen Touchstone - February 09, 2024 at 01:05 PM

CT

“ Charles and Gwen Touchstone purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Napoleon B. Cobb.



Charles and Gwen Touchstone - February 09, 2024 at 01:05 PM

YF

“ Your Student Relations Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Napoleon B. Cobb.



Your Student Relations Family - February 08, 2024 at 08:08 AM

VF

“ Vern Faison lit a candle in memory of Napoleon B. Cobb



Vern Faison - February 07, 2024 at 05:46 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Napoleon B. Cobb.



February 04, 2024 at 05:42 PM

NA

“ A blessing in my life and the lives of many.

NICOLE ANDERSON - February 03, 2024 at 01:06 PM

BG

Buck Godfrey: More Than Victories; The Will To Win! The mantra of my dear brother, Joe Gilliam, Eddie Robinson and myself- The Brotherhood of Bonded, unselfish LOVE for the Game and the boys we coached!

Buck Godfrey - February 03, 2024 at 06:42 PM

BG

Ken Cartwright, Napoleon' Cobb and myself- Dunkin Donut Coffee, Church's chicken and football tape. We're game planning for next week's game, while our young men and the community are celebrating the night's victory. Attention to detail and making sure the Panthers were prepared to compete by Sunday afternoon. Cobb, Ken and Buck. My friend worked; my friend WON!

Buck Godfrey - February 03, 2024 at 07:22 PM



“ *Virginia King lit a candle in memory of Napoleon B. Cobb* ”



Virginia king - February 03, 2024 at 12:12 PM