

# Bill Holmes

William (Bill) Holmes attended Beaumont High School in St. Louis, spent time in the military, and graduated from Northeast Missouri State Teachers' College (now Truman State University.) He was a key member of the Northeast football team and also became an amateur boxer.

Coach Holmes' first teaching position was at Herculaneum High School; he taught physical education and coached gymnastics and football. He coached football from the 1954-55 school year through the 1964-65 school year. He inherited a football program that had been in existence for only eight years. The program had never seen a win on a consistent basis until he arrived. By his second year, the team had improved to 5-5, and thereafter, he only had winning seasons. In 1958, the Blackcats won their first conference championship. Keep in mind, there were no play-offs in football in those days. In the sixties, they competed every year for the conference championship in the newly formed Mineral Area Conference. In 1962, Holmes' Blackcat football team lost their third game of the season and then went on to win their next seven games that year. In 1963, the team went undefeated and won the conference championship. In 1964, his team's record was 9-0-1; they tied for the conference championship. That put their streak at 27 games without a defeat. Most memorable was the conference championship victory over Crystal City in the final seconds in 1963 in front of 5,000 fans. Coach Holmes was truly the first coach to put Blackcat football "on the map."

Coach Holmes also promoted an active physical fitness program for the entire HHS student body and installed the high school's *Victory Bell*. Upon leaving Herculaneum High, he went on to coach football at the college level and rack up a winning record there as well.