

# Welcome to Jennie Dean Park



After the purchase by the County, the County Board delegated Anna P. Belcher, a member of the Arlington Interracial Commission, to name the playground. She named it after Jennie Serepta Dean. It is assumed the name was selected because Jennie Dean founded the Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth. Founded in 1938, it was the only school for higher education of African American students in five northern Virginia counties including Prince William, Fairfax, Loudoun, Fauquier, and Arlington.

Robert Winkler was raised in Green Valley. While never a full-time employee, he worked for Arlington's Department of Parks and Recreation for more than 40 years in the second half of the twentieth century. Mr. Winkler coached sports for Green Valley youth, as well as the women's Drew softball team. He often paid the registration fees for African American children, who had no other means for participating. He was a community activist who protected and preserved local fields for community sports. Mr. Winkler also assisted two young men, who qualified for Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) baseball, in traveling as far as California to participate. He was also known for obtaining food from food banks to feed local children in afterschool recreational programs. Mr. Winkler passed away on February 27, 2008.



With thanks to the Winkler estate.

Robert Winkler



Opening day, ca. 1948. Far left is Ernest Johnson, Supervisor of the Negro Section of the Arlington Department of Recreation, Mr. Tripp, counselor of School 153, and Warren Jackson, manager of a local team.

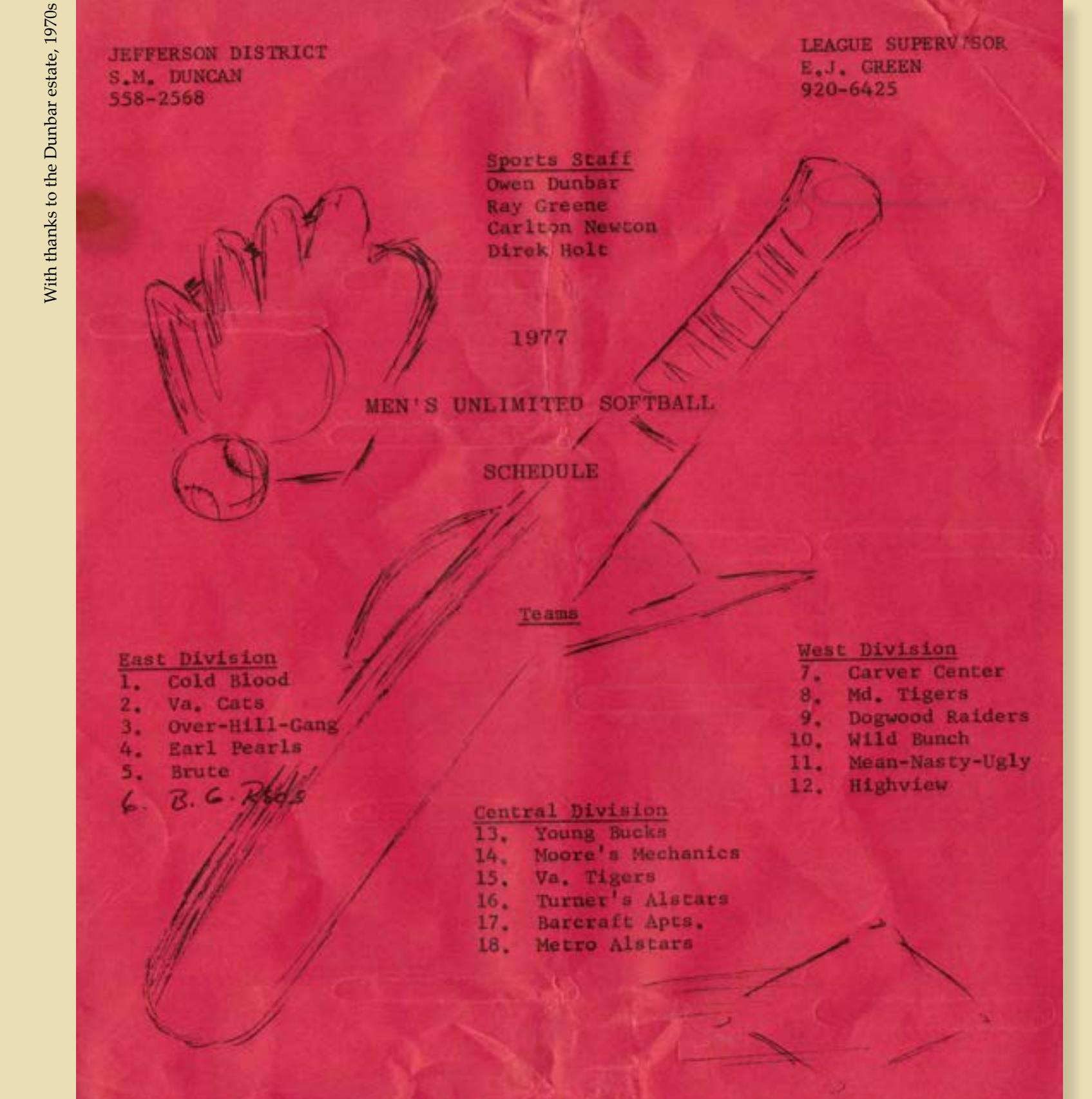
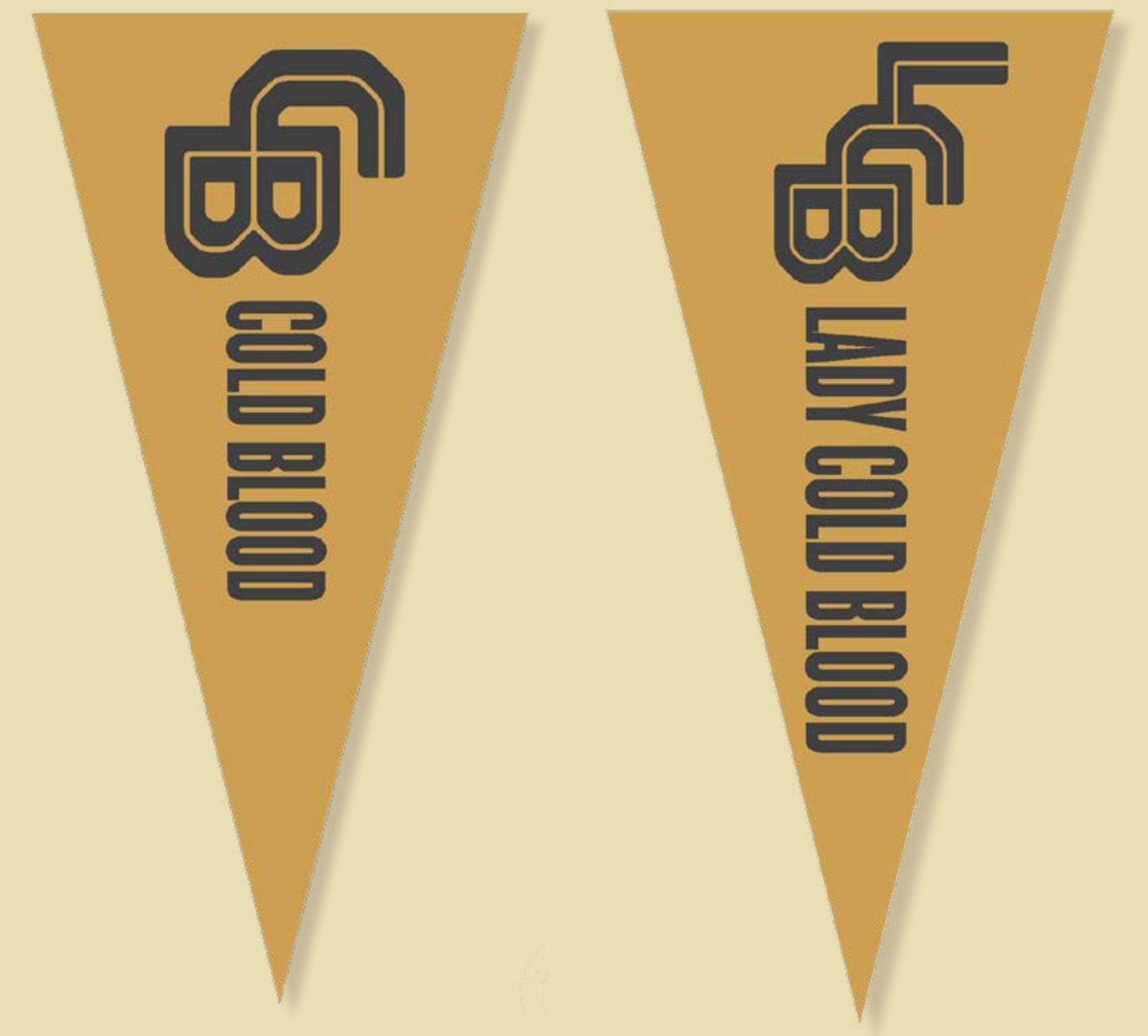
Ernest E. Johnson became the director of Arlington County's "Negro Recreation Section," a separate division of the County's segregated Department of Recreation in 1950. Under Mr. Johnson's leadership, the "Negro Recreation Section" expanded to include a variety of sports, dance, theater, musical and community events for all the African American communities in Arlington. Mr. Johnson oversaw the development of Jennie Dean Park and led an African American cub scout pack in Green Valley in 1952. In 1964, Arlington's Department of Recreation desegregated, and Mr. Johnson continued to serve the County. On May 8, 1982, Arlington celebrated Ernest E. Johnson Day with a parade that began at the Walter Reed Recreation Center and ended at the Carver Recreation Center, including softball games, senior tea, and testimonial dinner. Mr. Johnson died in December 1992.



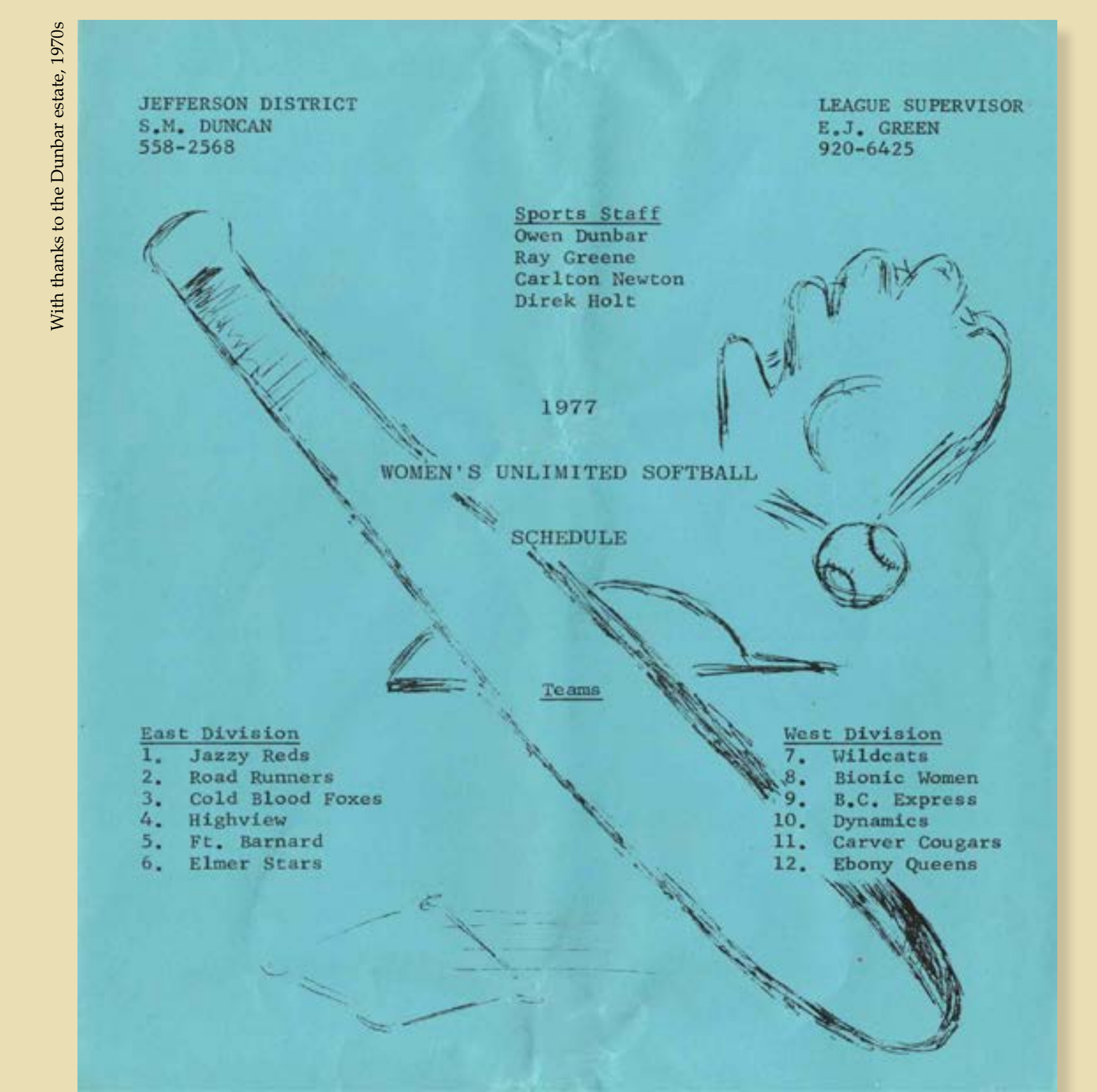
Youth football teams with Ernest E. Johnson and other coaches, 1950s.



Dapper in the park: Willie Lee Jacobs and Frances Jacobs, 1956



Softball Schedule for 1977 Men's League at Jennie Dean Park



Softball Schedule for 1977 Women's League in Jennie Dean Park

**Wild Bill Skids Way to Victory in Arlington Motorcycle Race: ...**  
*The Washington Post (1923-1954); Jul 11, 1938; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Washington Post pp. X3.*

**Wild Bill Skids Way to Victory In Arlington Motorcycle Race**  
**Daredevil Comes Up Smiling After Bad Spill, Tries to Beat Plane on Machine He Resurrected From Junk Pile for \$10.**

Skidding his booted left foot on the curves, J. E. "Wild Bill" Davis zoomed his way to glory in the all-colored motorcycle races at Green Valley, in Arlington County, yesterday.

It was a day of thrills for the members of the Flying Aces Motorcycle Club and for some 600 spectators in the Green Valley Ball Park. But after the dust had settled and the roar of the motorcycle exhausts died down, "Wild Bill" seemed clearly to be the hero of the day.

Not only did he win most of the races against his fellow riders and come back grinning from a bad spill at the turn, but he put up a good fight in a six-lap race with an airplane.

**Paid \$10 for Cycle.**

While most of the contestants were riding special racing machines, Wild Bill drove a motorcycle he bought for \$10. He found it discarded in someone's backyard and took the fenders off. That \$10 investment won him \$125 in prize money yesterday.

Between the exciting motorcycle week-ends with the Flying Aces and his job as a truck driver, he is 27 years old and lives at 1818 Eleventh street northwest. He has been riding a motorcycle for four years.

Wiping the sweat from his bushy moustache after his first victory yesterday, Wild Bill explained his name and his life in this fashion: "I been wanting to ride a motorcycle since I was a kid in North Carolina. As soon as I got one I started in races. Yeah, I bust up two or three machines a year.

**He's Just Crazy.**

"Wild Bill, Oh, I'm just crazy like that. That's all. Say, did you know that they send that ambulance out here free of charge?"

The feats of Wild Bill were not the only attraction of the afternoon. The 600 customers, all equipped with tickets carrying the advertisement of a local undertaker on one side, got a lot of fun from watching Linwood Jones, 38-year-old daredevil from Newport News, Va.

Jones dislained the races. His part for the day was to drive himself and his motorcycle through the fence especially constructed from half-inch pine boards. He did it, too, lowering his head, encased in a purple and silver football helmet, and smashing through the board like a motorized billy-goat.

**Never Gets Hurt.**

"Naw, I never get hurt," Jones said. "You know, I've got an 11-year-old daughter—her name's Mary Elizabeth—and she can ride as well as I can. You can say I'm going to the New World's Fair."

Between and during the races, Dallas "Little Red" McCornick, road captain of the Flying Aces, kept up a steady stream of chatter over the amplifying system. For instance, when one of the drivers entered in the next to the last race was having engine trouble, Little Red cracked:

"Just a minute, folks, they're doing a little adjusting on No. 15. Now, when you're sweet if you're not supposed to need any adjusting."

Wild Bill started his triumphant afternoon quickly by placing first in the time trials. That gave him the pole or inside position on the bumpy dirt track that circles the ball diamond. He made good use of it. He won the second event, but spilled in the third race when he crashed into Alexander Slyke on the first turn.

**Hand Is Sprained.**

Both Slyke and Wild Bill were cheerful about the mishap. Slyke, administering first aid to his injured opponent after they had been taken from the track, said Wild Bill suffered a badly sprained hand.

For the race with the airplane, piloted by Al Anderson, Wild Bill donned the colorful football helmet worn earlier by Linwood Jones. He set off grimly, holding his own with the yellow monoplane as it circled low over the field. Then, on the last lap, the plane shot suddenly into a vertical bank and apparently passed the cyclist at the finish line.

"He's cheatin' on Wild Bill," a man in a pink silk shirt observed sadly from the sidelines.

The featured 6-mile race was probably the most spectacular of the day. All four entrants spilled, one of them, Charles Royster, crashing through a sideline fence. But Wild Bill drove on to his final victory, barely edging out Gene Massie at the finish line.

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