

## A Legend Passes Away

Written by Staff Reports  
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Babe Howell, who coached for five decades (1950's-1990's, 44 years in all) passed away last Saturday at his home at the age of 84. Howell, won five state championships in football and baseball combined, and two North Carolina western championships in 1965 and 1966 before football championships were decided by a statewide playoff system.

He capped off his long coaching career at Avery High, where he spent four seasons (1994-97) and turned the Vikings (who were 1-9 in his first season) into a powerhouse program. He officially retired in 1998.

Howell, who was born in Monroe, N.C., graduated from Western Carolina University. He spent 24 years at Sylva-Webster High, which later consolidated into Smokey Mountain High School.

Howell, who also spent eight years as a head coach in Georgia, was 301-121-6. He was 198-78-6 during his tenure at Sylva-Webster/Smokey Mountain, where he was fired in 1990.

Howell also won 628 games in baseball and two state titles in 1974 and 1977. He was the former president of the North Carolina Coaches Association, and he served as both a head coach and an assistant coach in the East-West all-star game in Greensboro, N.C.

Two services were scheduled for the late Mr. Howell. One was held Wednesday night at the Reins-Sturdivant Funeral Home in Newland, N.C. The other will be held Saturday at Smokey Mountain High School at 4 p.m.