

As Seen in The Mirror's
SPORTS REFLECTIONS
 of Athletes and Events

Father's Day brings to mind the town's two outstanding sports fathers—"Daddy Sam" Ferebee and Charles J. McSorley. Neither is now among the living, but each sired a crop of fine athletes.

For years and years, New Bern's baseball, football and basketball

teams featured various members of the Ferebee and McSorley clans. The boys, to some extent dominated the scene, but the girls in both families had exceptional athletic ability too.

Environment undoubtedly played a part in the development of these respective sports stars. When you're born in a home where ball games take priority over just about everything else, you're bound to get interested yourself and do something about it.

Yet, it's impossible to acquire natural ability. That's where heredity comes in, and natural ability

was so prevalent with the Ferebees and the McSorleys that you've got to assume these youngsters were chips off the old block.

Old timers say Charlie McSorley, Jr., was the top athlete in his family. This, of course, could occasion argument among outsiders, if not among the McSorleys themselves. At any rate, Charlie was quite a pitcher before he sustained a leg injury that has plagued him ever since.

Francis "Peaches" McSorley turned out to be a hurler also. He wasn't quite in Charlie's class, but did some pretty fair chunking during his days at New Bern High. This despite the fact that he wasn't as rugged in build as some of his brothers.

All of the rest—Emmett, Robert, William and Paul, were versatile in sports other than baseball. In fact, they reaped their greatest glory from football, in addition to their achievement in baseball and basketball.

All of the McSorley girls—Elizabeth, Mary and Annie Pace, were basketball stars, although each came along in a different era. Just which one of the three was the best court performer is strictly a matter of opinion.

In the Ferebee family, you'd probably have to give a nod to Bill in the boys' section. Among other things he pitched two no-hitters in professional ball—one for Raleigh in the Piedmont and another for Selma (Ala) in the southeastern League.

Earlier, of course, he was an ace hurler for New Bern High and the University of North Carolina. In the waning days of his brilliant career he returned to New Bern and pitched for his town, much to the delight of local fans.

Sharing his fame, if not challenging it in some instances were Hamlin, Smokey, Francis, Billy and Edward. Defensively, Hamlin was as good a backstop as you'd want to find, and did right well at the plate too.

Smokey, a shortstop, was a better hitter than Ham, and led the Carolina team in home runs before his successful Coastal Plain days. Both were good ball toters in football, and Smokey quarterbacked the Tar Heels.

Little Bill, to our way of thinking, accomplished most on the basis of his ability. He was the smallest of the lot, and lacked the fleetness of foot that characterized his older brothers. Even so, he starred in three sports at New Bern High.

Billy was a weak sister at the plate when he played on the Coastal Plain and Battery D teams, but his fielding at second base was superb. For a man who wasn't naturally fast, he covered an astounding amount of ground, and figured in countless double plays.

Among the Ferebee girls, Beth and Reba were the basketballers. True to the family's record for sports excellence, they gave an excellent account of themselves.

Yes indeed, "Daddy Sam" Ferebee and Charles J. McSorley were sports fathers worth remembering on Father's Day.

The fellow who keeps his faults to himself lives in hope that they will soon be forgotten.

The Ocean's Only Nine Feet Below

New Bern, the last time we heard, was nine feet above sea level, compared with Mount Mitchell in Yancey county—rising 6,684 feet above sea level.

The lowest point in the state, of course, is at sea level along the coast. In case you're wondering,

North Carolina's average elevation is 700 feet.

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