



Achumba the Scholar, Achumba the Athlete, Achumba the Officer, Achumba the Worker.

Walter Iheanyi Achumba, star defenseman for the Belmont Abbey College Crusaders, has proven to be a rare jewel in the Abbey Soccer Program.

Born 23 years ago in Ekive, Nigeria, Walter excelled in many sports at Stella Maris High School, among them the pole vault, the long jump, and the sprint. However, soccer was his first love. Having played since he was able to take his first step, the Abbey soccer standout was named captain of his soccer team at Stella Maris for three consecutive years.

From his brother, Obinna Achumba, who graduated from U.N.C. at Charlotte, Walter learned of Belmont Abbey College; he made plans to attend in 1967. Unfortunately, civil war broke out in his Nigerian homeland. At the age of eighteen, Achumba joined the Biafran Army, serving as a Lieutenant. In 1970 the hostilities ceased, and Walter once again made plans to attend the Abbey.

Because the first letter Walter received from Coach Stanley Dudko took three months to be delivered, Achumba did not reach Belmont Abbey until March of 1971. The semester was already in progress when he arrived, so he stayed in



The Rev. John P. Bradley, President of Belmont Abbey College, shows Achumba and his soccer coach, Stanley Dudko, the many letters he has written to the Nigerian Embassy in an effort to bring Achumba's wife, Nenna, into the United States.

### The Many Lives Of Walter Achumba

Charlotte with his brother Obinna, who at that time was studying for his master's degree in geography.

The day Walter reported for his first soccer practice at the Abbey will always be a memorable one. He later recalled, "It was so cold that day I had to wear long johns and a track suit, and still I wasn't able to practice for long."

In 1972, despite the strain of practicing from 3 til 5 everyday, working from 6 til 10 at night, and maintaining a straight "B" average, Achumba showed his opponents that he was a man to be reckoned with. Few players have ever contributed so much to an Abbey soccer team as has Walter Achumba, and the team's future shines that much brighter whenever Achumba steps onto the field of play.

Last season Achumba captured a berth on the 1972 National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics District 26 All-Star Soccer Team and made

the All-NAIA Region Tournament Team. He became eligible to be chosen for this team when the Abbey Crusaders reached the finals in Dunn, N.C., by defeating St. Bernard's College of Alabama.

Achumba's life has not been easy. While attending Central Piedmont Community College, he carried 18 quarter hours and worked at Charlotte Memorial Hospital from 10:00 p.m. until 7:00 a.m. From there he walked directly to school, where his classes lasted till 4:00 p.m.

Yet, this can't be compared with his experience in the army, which included a period as a prisoner of war. "I found myself between death and life. The couple of days I passed in the guard-room, with the normal ordeal and torture, gave me the courage to face every situation. These can't be compared to the threat of being shot or burned alive. All was overcome with courage. Even the war days when one spent up to a week

without food, feeding on nothing but raw cassava, if he could find any, contributed a lot towards my adaptation to situations." He is happy the war is over and things are coming back to normal. He hopes to go back home to help his people when he is graduated.

"Another reason for my being able to make it is that Belmont Abbey is one of the rare colleges where you can find such friendly people-faculty, staff, administration, and students; people who listen to your problems both academic and otherwise, people from whom you can hope for a helping hand. I have talked to students from other schools, and they are always surprised when I tell them how extraordinarily happy I find myself in this school." This has minimized his feeling of homesickness. He still sometimes feels badly when he misses his family, but he tries to endure it.

His wife, Nenna, an "A" graduate of Ouim Girls High School, has been accepted at the Abbey. Mr. Achumba is affiliated with the First United Methodist Church in Belmont. The church and its Pastor, Rev. Garland Young, are helping him to bring his wife to the United States. He has strong relations with the families of Mr. and Mrs. Ernst Hostettler, who are, respectively, professors at Johnson C. Smith University and Queen's College in Charlotte, and with the Rev. and Mr. Floyd Peterson of Little Rock A.M.E. Zion Church in Charlotte.

While Achumba has earned a full academic scholarship from Belmont Abbey College, the Hostettlers also contribute toward his support, while the Petersons do every other thing one's family would do for him. "All these people help me feel more at home," he said.

#### (ALUMNI NEWS, Contd.)

children live in Stanley, N.C. Steve Dolley is an attorney in Gastonia, where he and Julia and their five children live. Robert Bertram is president of Williams & Shelton Co. in Charlotte. William Balthis is a machinist with Klutz Machine Co. in Gastonia. Tom Bain is a physician in Crozet, Va., where he and Ruth and their seven children live. Harold Cauble is an air pollution hygienist with the Mecklenburg County (N.C.) Health Department in Charlotte. Jacob Thorpe is a dentist in Charlotte. Patrick Norton is personnel officer for the State of North Carolina and he and Ruth and their five children live in Raleigh. Norman Moore is a dentist in Norfolk, Va.

'49--Lloyd Stewart is market representation manager for Ford Marketing Corporation in Gastonia. He and Jean have three children. John O'Donoghue is a salesman with Federal Paper Board Co. in Montvale, N.J. He and Suzanne and their three children live in Darien, Conn. Kenneth Galther is a shipping clerk with Pharr Yarns in McAdenville. Bill Williamson is an investment banker in Charlotte and vice president of

Reynolds Securities, Inc. DeWitt Beatty, Jr. owns a real estate and insurance business in Mt. Holly, N.C. Charles Goldsborough is an optometrist in Culpepper, Virginia, where he and Marilyn and their five children live. Jack Sherry is technical assistant with the American Red Cross Blood Bank in Norfolk.

'50--Clifford Moose owns Moose Motor Mart in Gastonia. Dan Gunter is president-treasurer of Smith Textile Apron Co. in Gastonia and is also a member of the Advisory Board of Belmont Abbey College. Harvie Curlee is chief plant and equipment engineer of Talon Zipper Co. in Stanley, N.C. Paul Loehr is with Aetna Casualty & Surety Co. in Richmond, where he and Marian and their four children live.

'51--Wells McConnell is a chemist and production manager for Sou-Tex Chemical Co. in Mt. Holly, N.C. Sidney Sellers operates Westvaco, an oil refinery in Charleston, S.C.

'52--Gerald Sinkow owns The Famous Mart in Charlotte.

'53--Jerry Cooke owns The Hobby House in Blacksburg, S.C. where he and Shirley and their four children live. John Campbell is an attorney in In-

dependence, Va. He and Susie have three children.

'54--Father Kieran Neilson is pastor of St. Michael's Church in Gastonia. Ken Tanner is news and sports director of Radio WRGM in Richmond. Ken also spends time as a basketball official.

'55--Enjoyed the letter from Dr. Jim Quinn, director of nuclear medicine at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago. Jim will be honored in April when he will be made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons-Faculty of Radiology in Ireland and will present the Triennial Memorial Lecture in Dublin. It was good to see Eugene Kusterer when he stopped by the Abbey the last of October. He has been teaching in California. Nesbit Hollis is principal of East Gaston High School. Frank Watkins is assistant vice president of the Bank of Belmont.

'56--James Cole is a postal clerk in Gastonia. He and Katherine have three children.

'57--Bob Curran is a partner in the law firm of Marshall, Blalock, Garner & Millner in Newport News, Virginia, where he and Nancy and their three children live. Bob received his law degree from Georgetown

University. John Santos is in real estate appraisals and sales with Henry Schachte & Sons in Charleston, S.C. He and Judy and their three children live in Mt. Pleasant. James Smith is field engineer with Duke Power Co. in Gastonia. Bill Fletcher is with the U.S. Postal Service in Charlotte, where he and Jimmy Nell and their four children live. Patrick McHugh is claims attorney with All State Insurance Co. in Raleigh. He and Mary Ida have six children.

'58--Roger Myers is production control manager of knitting with Maiden Knitting & Finishing Co. in Maiden, N.C. Congratulations to Louis Seaman, who was No. 1 salesman in the nation for Rexall Drugs for 1972. He and Geri and their three children live in Yakima, Washington.

'59-- Congratulations to Jim Mead, who has been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the Marine Corps. Enjoyed seeing Mary Ann and Charlie Wade and their three children, the twins, Theresa and Mary Ann, and Charlie junior, when they visited the Abbey on December 28. Ruth Conrad is reading clinician with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. James Fogarty is manager of the Marine Department of Jones

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