

THE HILLTOP

VOLUME LVI, Number 2

Serving the Mars Hill College Community

Thursday, OCTOBER 28, 1982

Exclusive Interview

Gibson Calls Appeals Process 'Whitewash'

On Thursday, October 21, THE HILLTOP conducted a personal interview with former Mars Hill Athletic Director Claude Gibson. This exclusive interview was before the appeals board had met and decided to uphold Gibson's termination. Our primary objective in this conversation was to hear the entire story from Gibson's point of view. HILLTOP editors Steve Ferguson and Gina Worley conducted the question and answer session, which lasted for almost an hour.

HILLTOP: Tell us about your meeting with Dr. Fred Bentley after the meeting with the administrative team in which Dr. Bentley announced your dismissal.

GIBSON: My only purpose in going to see him was to get the football players back. When I got through, I said I want you to understand one thing: I didn't come here to blackmail you, nor am I begging you for anything. He said I think this should be contingent on you getting the players back. I said I don't want there to be any linkage between getting the players back and what you feel like you said was right.

When I came back, and read the agreement over, he had stuck in there that, as a result of these negotiations, that I would not appeal. I did at one

point say to him that my feeling at this time is that I would not appeal, and without this, chances are I wouldn't have anyway. That was very offensive to me when he put that in there.

HILLTOP: You notified us in regards to the story that was run in the October 15 issue of the HILLTOP. You said there were some items factually you'd like to clarify.

GIBSON: I think where you were in error, it's true that my daughter, no matter what happened, she would have been given free tuition for the rest of this year. But what he has put in here, she would have free tuition benefits 'till her baccalaureate degree, and my younger daughter would too.

HILLTOP: Do you expect to win the appeal?

GIBSON: No. It's a "whitewash" all the way.

HILLTOP: Your lawyer can be there, but he can't speak. Is that true?

GIBSON: That's what they say. I don't know who's advising our president, but all he's doing is hurting the college position if there ever was any litigation. One of the board members contacted the chairman of the board Ben Knott, and he said I'm really not interested in talking about it, I certainly wouldn't want to

talk to Coach Gibson, because I want to be fair and I don't want to prejudice the case.

But the board member at that point said this is kind of ironic that you want to be fair and impartial, you don't want to meet with Coach Gibson, yet you're meeting with school attorneys and Fred Bentley around the clock.

Fred Bentley, last Thursday night, drove to Charlotte. I, very frankly, had somebody that staked the thing out. He spent the night, with Ben Knott and drove back; he arrived in Mars Hill at 10:30 Friday morning. So it doesn't make sense if he's going to be fair and impartial if he meets with one side and not with the other.

What's going to happen is this: they'll use college policy when it benefits their position. When you start looking at that handbook, they violated numerous provisions in there, and when you read the constitution, it says the appeal will be before the entire board, it doesn't say anything about a select executive committee. The other thing, whether you have a closed or open hearing is something that's supposed to be mutually agreed on between the two parties.

I think President Bentley's credibility

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PHOTO BY JOHN CAMPBELL

Claude "Hoot" Gibson

news briefs

The club engages in camping and hiking, and is hoping to do some service projects this year.

Contact David A. Williams, president, at 689-1157 for more details.

Jeff Coppage, Journeyman to Togo, will be on campus for Missionary Awareness Day today, October 28th to speak at Campus Worship at 6:45 p.m. He will also be available to talk with students about foreign mission service.

Also for Missionary Awareness Day, a slide show will be shown in the Timberline Coffeehouse from 1-5 p.m. Reservations from the Baptist State Convention will also be available to talk to.

Halloween and Halloween II will be shown in the Timberline on Friday, October 29th at 8:00 p.m. The movies are sponsored by Wren College Union Coffeehouse Committee.

First place in the Lion Growl skits went to Lamdi Chi Omega. Second place was the Freshman Class, while Iota Alpha Omega took third place.

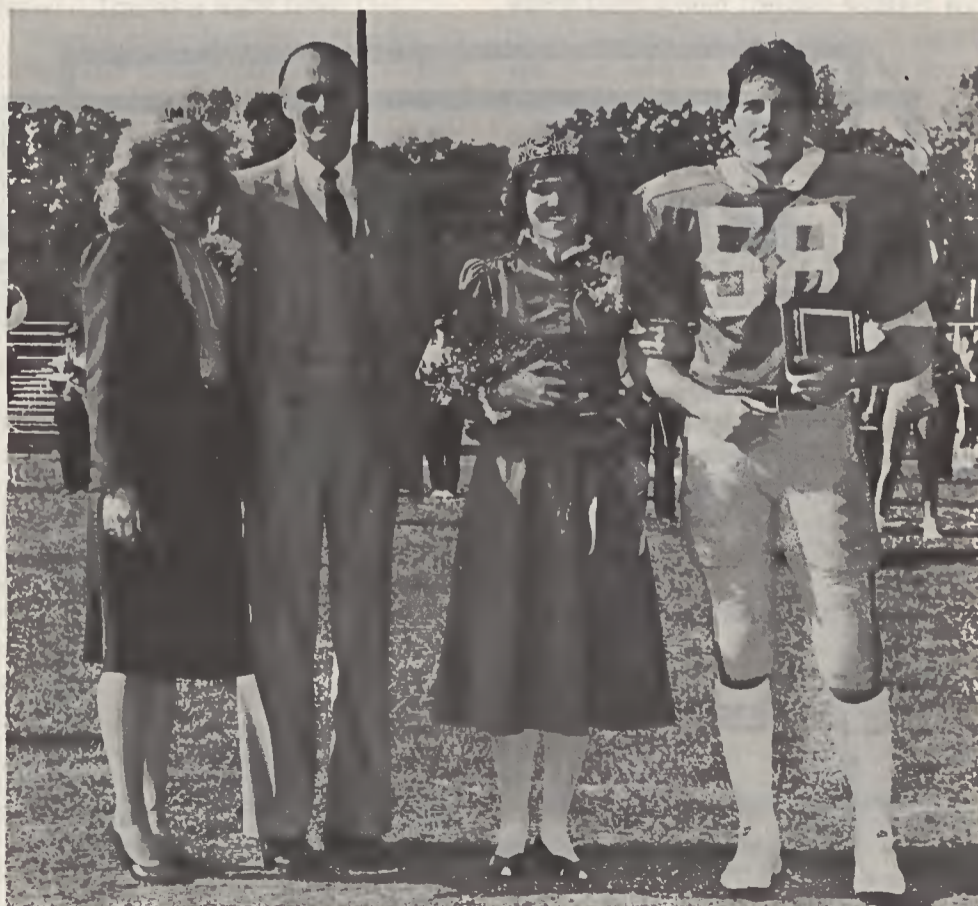


PHOTO BY JOHN CAMPBELL

1982 Homecoming Queen Susan Freeman and John Sprinkle

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Mars Hill, N.C. 28754

The meetings are held on Wednesday...
ights at 6:30 in the Blue Lounge of the...
College Union. Everyone is welcome to...
tend the meetings, whether they are an...
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The Outdoor Club has undergone or...
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eration.