GOOSE CREEK
CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Archway and Plaque Dedicated to Coach Ronnie Kluch

Former players, former co-workers, friends and family gathered at the entrance to Ross S. Sterling High School's baseball field as the archway, proclaiming it as Ronnie Kluch Field, and a bronze plaque were dedicated to the Rangers' coaching legend. The field was named for Kluch in 2005, but the archway and plaque were recent additions.

In his 10 years of coaching baseball at Sterling, beginning in 1971, Coach Kluch compiled a record of 200-74. His teams won four district championships, and the 1979 team appeared in the state championship game. Kluch was named district Coach of the Year four times.

Kevin Foxworth, RSS principal, welcomed those in attendance. Trevor Brown, RSS student body president, led the pledges to the flags, and Reggie Taleno, RSS all-state choir member, sang the national anthem. Randal O'Brien, Goose Creek CISD superintendent of schools, introduced special guests.

Paul Tadlock, RSS head baseball coach from 1998 – 2014, who was instrumental in gaining approval from the Board of Trustees for the naming of the field, reflected about going through files on his first day as head coach and realizing the impact Kluch had on his players.

"It only comes along so often that a person comes along that makes a lasting impression on individuals that he coaches and the program that they're involved in. Coach Kluch is obviously one of those people," said Tadlock.

Varsity center fielder in 1975 and 1976 Deacon Winters thanked Kluch for the lessons that he taught him during the time he played for the Rangers. After graduating from Sterling, he graduated from the Air Force Academy and flew F-15s for 13 years in the Air Force before becoming a pilot for United Airlines.

"Coach Kluch taught me every day when you get up out of bed, be the best you can be—better than you were the day before," said Winters. "And that's something that has carried with me throughout my whole life—my whole career in the military and civilian life."

Wes Walker, RSS varsity pitcher in 1978, 1979 and 1980, later played for San Jacinto College, Baylor and the University of Houston.

"He made you want to leave it all on the field, and he had the ability to give his players confidence in themselves," said Walker.

Former RSS head baseball coach Ronnie Kluch (at left) visits with former players (l to r) Jimmy Twardowski, Danny Twardowski and Deacon Winters at the dedication of the archway and plaque at Ronnie Kluch Field.

View photo gallery here. View event here.

Baytown Mayor Stephen DonCarlos read a proclamation stating that April 2, 2015, was Ronnie Kluch Day in Baytown. Bernie Mulvaney, Goose Creek CISD athletic director, dedicated the archway and plaque.

"He set a standard of excellence for the Sterling baseball program, and his favorite saying is, 'Play it like a man. Enjoy it like a boy,' " said Mulvaney.

After Mulvaney acknowledged Kluch's family for the patience and understanding they showed during the long hours he put in coaching his teams, Luke Kincaid, RSS varsity baseball player, presented Kluch's wife Fredlyn with a bouquet of flowers from the 2015 Rangers varsity baseball team.

Finally, Kluch took his turn at the podium to express his appreciation to everyone involved in the dedication and to his family, especially his daughter Kim Baker, teacher at Gentry Junior School. He gave credit to his players for all the wins, saying he loved every player he had ever coached, and ended with a quote he said was the basis of his coaching career.

"Life's battles don't always go to the biggest, strongest or fastest man, but sooner or later the man who wins is the man who thinks he can," said Kluch.

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