

Team Player

There was a significant omission from your excellent feature on Howard W. Martin Jr., Virginia State Bar president, in the June/July 2007 edition (probably due to his modesty).

Years ago, Freddie Stant and I were having cocktails at the Harbor Club one evening when I suggested that we might line up a number of lawyers who had played basketball in college and enter a team in a rather fast, over-thirty league in Portsmouth. I had played at William and Mary and Freddie at the University of Virginia, where he was a rebounder “extraordinaire.” (I kidded Freddie that he had the “sharpest elbows in the conference.”) The team quickly became a reality and was named The Barristers. The Barristers was a viable entity for close to ten years, after which most of us quit because Neil Johnston, formerly of the Philadelphia 76ers and the Virginia Squires, came into the league to play for another team when he went to work for a local sheriff’s office.

Howard had played basketball as well as baseball at Washington and Lee, and immediately became our “big man.” We also were privileged to have his partner, Tim Coyle, who was a left-handed point guard and quick as greased lightning. We had a decent ball club and won a few championships, but we could not have done so without our “big man” in the middle, whom we depended upon for both offensive and defensive rebounds. There was a lot of camaraderie on that team. “Mo” Whitlow, currently a general district court judge in Portsmouth, was a member, as well as Jim Councill of Richmond, Tommy Johnson of the Wilcox firm, Hunter Sims of the Kaufman firm, Phil Trapani—former Norfolk City Attorney—and Tommy Conner, who, frankly, was our star.

(The problem with Tommy was that if you threw the ball to him as our shooting guard, you would never get it back, and we referred to a pass to Tommy as being one made “into a black hole.”) Mike Price of Old Dominion University fame completed the team of lawyers. We had one “ringer” certified public accountant, Harvey Roberts, who starred in both basketball and tennis at the University of Richmond. He was our power forward.

But through it all, President Martin, as our “big man,” was the glue that held our team together, the same way that I predict that he will hold our bar together.

Montgomery Knight Jr.
Norfolk

Oliver W. Hill Memorial Contributions

Persons wishing to make contributions in memory of Oliver White Hill, the Richmond civil rights lawyer whose career included *Brown v. Board of Education* and many other cases, may consider the following options:

- The **Oliver Hill Foundation**, which works to ensure Mr. Hill’s civil rights legacy. The foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, has purchased Mr. Hill’s boyhood home in Roanoke, and is developing it as a center for fostering human rights. Address: P.O. 2246, Richmond, VA 23218.
- The Virginia Law Foundation’s **Oliver White Hill Public Service Internships**, which support interns to work in civil rights and civil liberties law. The Oliver White Hill Foundation receives the interest earned by this fund. Checks may be written to the VLF and designated for the “OWH PSI.” The VLF’s address: 700 East Main Street, Suite 1501, Richmond, VA 23219.

Mr. Hill died August 5 at age one hundred.