

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 434
By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to name the basketball court at the Thompson-Boling Arena at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) the "Ray Mears Court".

WHEREAS, Ray Mears, former head basketball coach at Wittenberg University and the University of Tennessee (Knoxville), contributed significantly to the programs at both schools and is widely acknowledged to be one of the best coaches of all time; and

WHEREAS, a native of Dover, Ohio, Coach Mears is a distinguished 1949 graduate of the Miami of Ohio University; and

WHEREAS, as the head basketball coach at Wittenberg University from 1956-1962, he firmly established a winning tradition; his excellent record at that institution still stands as one of the greatest success stories ever in college athletics; and

WHEREAS, his Wittenberg teams had an enviable overall record of 121-23, an outstanding winning percentage of .840; and

WHEREAS, the 1958-1959 team won the Ohio Conference championship, the 1959-1960 and 1960-1961 squads won both the regular season and tournament Ohio Conference titles, and the fabled 1961-1962 team won both the Ohio Conference and NCAA College Division championships; and

WHEREAS, under his astute tutelage, Wittenberg led the NCAA College Division in defense for three straight years, had an Ohio Conference record 40-game winning streak and

won a school-record 69 straight home games; and

WHEREAS, Coach Mears, who was chosen Ohio Coach of the Year in 1960, coached and/or recruited three Tiger Little All-America players (Bert Price, George Fisher and Al Thrasher), two Ohio Conference Most Valuable Players (Terry Deems and Bert Price), and coached players who were first team All-Ohio Conference eight times in six years; and

WHEREAS, he is still the winningest basketball coach in Ohio Conference history as ranked by percentage; and

WHEREAS, Coach Mears was the head coach at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) from 1962-1977, and under his brilliant leadership the Volunteers compiled an overall record of 278 wins and only 112 losses, an exceptional winning percentage of .713; and

WHEREAS, he is the winningest coach in Tennessee history in terms of victories; and

WHEREAS, during his exemplary tenure, UT, which had not won a Southeastern Conference title since the 1943-1944 season, won three SEC championships in 1966-1967, 1971-1972 and 1976-1977 and finished runner-up eight times; and

WHEREAS, he also led Tennessee to its first appearance in the NCAA Tournament in 1967 and return trips to the NCAA in 1976 and 1977 to its first twenty-victory season in 1964-1965, and to a third place finish in the National Invitational Tournament in 1969; and

WHEREAS, Ray Mears expertly coached nine first team Vol All-Americans: Danny Schultz (1964), A. W. Davis (1965), Ron Robbins (1966), Ron Widby (1967), Tom Boerwinkle (1968), Bill Justis (1969), Jimmy English (1971), Bernard King (1975, 1976 and 1977) and Ernie Grunfeld (1976 and 1977); four SEC Players of the Year: Ron Widby

(1967), Mike Edwards (1972), Bernard King (1975, 1976 and 1977) and Ernie Grunfeld (1977); and twenty-seven first team All-SEC players; and

WHEREAS, he was selected SEC Coach of the Year in 1967 and 1977 and also established the Volunteer Classic basketball tournament in 1966; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that his numerous contributions to collegiate basketball, and especially the national recognition his coaching brought to the University of Tennessee athletic program, be specially honored and commemorated; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That the basketball court at the Thompson-Boling Arena be officially designated the "Ray Mears Court".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the University of Tennessee and Coach Mears, with this final clause omitted from such copy.

A RESOLUTION to name the basketball court at the Thompson-Boling Arena at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) the "Ray Mears Court".

A RESOLUTION to name the basketball court at the Thompson-Boling Arena at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) the "Ray Mears Court".

A RESOLUTION to name the basketball court at the Thompson-Boling Arena at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) the "Ray Mears Court".

A RESOLUTION to name the basketball court at the Thompson-Boling Arena at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) the "Ray Mears Court".

A RESOLUTION to name the basketball court at the Thompson-Boling Arena at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) the "Ray Mears Court".