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May 23, 2023

Mr. Bill Blackwell  
Executive Director  
Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame  
1152 Lakeland Drive  
Jackson, MS 39216

Dear Mr. Blackwell,

I was a player for, and student of Coach Bill Raphael at St. Joseph High School, then at Clinton MS. (1975-1979).

I am writing this letter to express my strongest support and recommendation that Coach Raphael be inducted into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame.

Coach Raphael was a very strong positive influence on so many student athletes over the years. That applies to young men and young women.

What an impressive builder of character and leadership and integrity this man was. Literally decades after their experience with Coach Raphael, most students and athletes can recall Coach Raphael stories like it was yesterday.

This man was loved and respected, and made such a long lasting positive impression on the students at St. Joe.

And what a winner he was. You'll get, or already have all of the statistics and won/loss records, etc., but the numbers, as great as they are, don't come close to revealing what a winner this man really was.

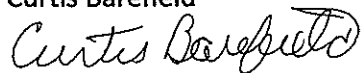
This is a letter of recommendation regarding the "Sports" Hall of Fame, and I keep getting carried away with things that speak of Coach Raphael's character, but it's unavoidable.

I was a student in Coach Raphael's algebra class, and I was a player on his football teams for 3 years. I was on that famous Capital Bowl team as a sophomore. I was just reading the chapter about that bowl game in the book written about Coach Raphael by Nikki Arthur, and it is still emotional. That's another point....I don't know the answer to this question, but how many other Mississippi high school coaches have a hard back book written and published about them?

Mr. Blackwell, I could go on, and I will at your invitation, but I'll stop for now.

Please accept this letter my personal and deeply heart felt recommendation that Coach Bill Raphael be accepted and inducted into the Mississippi Sport Hall of Fame.

Thank you sir,  
Curtis Barefield

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Curtis Barefield". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.