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[The Coach: Duncan Anderson \(1946-2012\) dedicated his life to the game and the kids](#)

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Back in 1989, then-Delta Pacers head coach Dunc Anderson shares a moment with famed Indiana Hoosiers head coach Bob Knight during a coaches clinic at IU. (Anderson family collection)

Dunc Anderson guided more than 50 different teams over a span of 37 seasons as a B.C. high school basketball coach. He was already

planning for the 2012-13 season, which he had said would be his last. However this past Sunday, eight days after suffering both a stroke and heart attack, Anderson passed away at age 66. Today, some of those who knew him well reflect on the life of man who made a difference.



Dunc Anderson (centre, front) with the 2011-12 Seaquam senior varsity.

NORTH DELTA — His is a story that needs no precise starting point, because the beauty of Dunc Anderson's life was that it always remained consistent with his ideals.

At any point of his journey, from running the steep hills as preseason conditioning with the legendary 1964 Prince Rupert Rainmakers, to scrapping his way to a spot on the freshman team at Simon Fraser as a 28-year-old in the early 1970s, to beginning a high school coaching career in 1974 that would go on to touch parts of five decades, he carried the imbedded work ethic of an underdog through the doors of every gymnasium he ever set foot in.

Yet on Tuesday, as those who knew him best reflected on his passing, it became clear that the line he was able to navigate so strikingly between disciplinarian and caring father-figure would stand as his greatest legacy.

Anderson, who was either an assistant or head coach at five of Delta's seven high schools, was in his second go-round at Seaquam Secondary, and was preparing to begin his third season as the Seahawks senior varsity head coach this fall. He had also previously coached at Sands, Delta, Burnsvew and North Delta, often times concurrently. His only non-active seasons came after suffering a heart attack and later, undergoing heart surgery.

Former Seahawks' head coach James Johnston, who brought Anderson back to Seaquam as an assistant in 2007-08 before leaving two seasons later to become vice-principal at South Delta Secondary, recalled how deeply Anderson cared for his teams.

"With Dunc, the thing I appreciated most about him was that while he loved the superstar, he loved his No. 12 guy just as much," Johnston said. "He wanted that No. 12 kid to go on and play post-secondary basketball, even though he may have been a football player, or a drama student that just wanted to play."



Duncan Anderson coached for 37 years in Delta.
(Seaquam Athletics)

And the kind of influence he had on his players?

Nick Day has been coaching junior and senior boys basketball teams at Surrey's Fleetwood Park the past 13 years, and was a member of the 1993 Delta Pacers team from Ladner which, featuring standout Navi Sekhon and a very deep and capable roster, made the B.C. tournament.

"There's four guys off our team that became teachers," Day said. "But that's just one example. There's firefighters, there's policemen. There's all these guys that have gone into various systems to serve people, to work with the public, and that is (Anderson's) legacy."

And through it all, Anderson and his wife Judy raised four children (John,

Kathleen, James, Sarah), all of whom with the exception of Kathleen, Anderson coached during their high school years. Anderson helped coach Team B.C. to an Under-19 national title in 1991 but had said that his biggest highlight was winning the B.C. Grade 9 championship with Burnsvie in 1999, with John as his assistant and James as a player.

And although he and his wife were planning to move to Abbotsford before the start of next season, Anderson wasn't going to let the heavy commute times get in the way of his final season of coaching.

"I said to him 'You're moving to Abbotsford, so you're just going to drive back and forth to practice?'" longtime former North Delta Huskies' head coach Bill Edwards recalled. "And he just said 'Yeah'. That was one thing that was really special about Duncan. It didn't matter what the sacrifice was. If he liked the kids, he wanted to coach them."

And that even extended to kids who weren't playing on his high school teams.

Current Sands' junior girls coach Kevan Gaull was a ninth grader who happened to live a few houses away from Anderson in North Delta at a time when Anderson was still coaching at Delta Secondary in Ladner.

"My parents put up a hoop in front of my cul-de-sac and I'd be out there playing by myself," Gaull remembers. "Mr. Anderson would come by and rebound and we'd talk basketball. He helped me with my shot, he was the first one to tell me about Pistol Pete (Maravich). And, (the Andersons) had a half-court in their own back yard. He gave me an open invitation to come to his back yard and shoot at any time, which I did."

Brian Dore, who along with Nick Racanelli, served as Anderson's assistant coaches this past season, saw that love for the game every moment they were together.

"It was everything to him," Dore said. "It was his life, every moment. He just had this absolute passion for basketball. You just don't see that."

Added Johnston: "There aren't a lot of Dunc Andersons anymore. The pure coaches. The guys who don't want to move up to the college ranks or the CIS because they just love coaching high school kids. And they love doing it for free because no one is getting paid here."

And no one, Day says, can put a price on what Dunc Anderson grew to mean to so many.

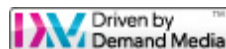
"When you look back, obviously your parents play a huge role in who you are," Day said. "They shape and they guide you. But there's not many people outside of your family that will have that big an effect. Maybe you can point to one or two, and for me, he is one of those guys."

(A gathering to celebrate Anderson's life is being planned for this weekend. To read tributes to Anderson or write one yourself, or to share and view pictures, log on to duncan.anderson.muchloved.com)

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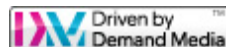
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1. *Angela Peel*
[7:37 PM on June 7, 2012](#)

Thank you for publishing such a beautiful article, about my one-in-a-million Uncle, Duncan Anderson. I, too, feel it is important to acknowledge his life's passions, & how much he contributed to so many lives during his life & career. Sincere thanks from our whole family....

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