

# Daggett's job: Keeping camp inventory intact

By **ROBERT WILSON**  
Jackson Daily News Sports Writer

CARNESVILLE, Ga. — Bill Bolton and Bill Cronauer were the men up front when the first B/C basketball camp opened up in 1977, but John "Dog" Daggett was the man behind the scenes.

Bolton and Daggett knew each other when they were at Ole Miss in the mid 1970s. Bolton was an assistant basketball coach. Daggett was the equipment manager. When Bolton and Cronauer began collecting ingredients for the first camp, they needed an experienced equipment man.

"He needed somebody to come in and get jerseys and keep all the equipment organized," said Daggett. "I had experience with equipment and he wanted me to come along and help him with the camp. He was going to start a camp store and he didn't want to lose anything. I was glad to help out."

Daggett, a Cleveland native and a Delta State graduate, is a veteran equipment man. He has worked in the National Football League and the United States Football League and at three universities, Ole Miss, Missouri and Michigan.

Daggett had his nickname pinned on him as a freshman at Holmes Junior College in Goodman in 1961.

"We had name tags on and they misspelled my name," said Daggett. "Instead of Daggett, they put Doggett. All the varsity football players started calling me Deputy Dog and it stuck. Billy Mustin, now the head of the Loyalty Foundation at Ole Miss, was the head coach then."

Daggett thought he had lost the nickname when he went to Missouri in '79.

"I was away from anybody that knew me at Missouri," said Daggett. "But wouldn't you know it, guess who we played in the first game of my first season at Missouri? Ole Miss in Jackson. And Dog was started all over again."

Daggett worked the first two B/C camps. Donnie Fuller and Jim Sledge, two assistants under Daggett at Ole Miss, continued the tradition.

This year, Daggett returned upon Bolton's request. The camp was beginning its second year here at the Southeastern Sports and Education Complex after nine years at Milledgeville in south central Georgia.

"Bull (Bolton) called me because he was starting his football camp and he wanted to know who in the NFL had a testing program that he could copy for his camp," said Daggett. "Jim Anderson of the Rams had it and mailed it to him. As we were talking, Bull asked me to come handle the equipment end."



L-R Bill Bolton, John Daggett, Roger Theder San Diego Chargers

"Equipment is a very big part of this business and I wanted a man with experience to run the show. The man to do the job was Dog," said Bolton. "He is a tremendous organizer and he put in a pro-type system in our storage bins for all the camps we have. He keeps a running inventory of all our equipment."

"When I graduated from Delta State, I handed my mother my diploma and hitchhiked 1,300 miles to Boca Raton, Fla., to work with the Miami Dolphins," said Daggett. "George Chesser, who I had roomed with in college, was drafted by the Dolphins and they needed some help with equipment."

Daggett worked with the Browns, Giants and Dolphins from 1967-72 before another opportunity came along.

"I went to the Pro Bowl in Dallas with the trainer with the New York Giants that year and we were in a bar called Wellington owned by Craig Morton," said Daggett. "We were sitting there talking and we started talking to these three other guys sitting at the next table. They were (former Southern Mississippi football coach) P.W. Underwood, (former New Orleans Saints owner) John Mecom and (sports agent and Hattiesburg attorney) Bud Holmes. P.W. asked me what I was did and I told him. He needed an equipment man and he hired me."

Daggett worked at USM until May of 1974 when he went to Ole Miss when Ken Cooper took over. In August, Bolton came to Oxford.

"In August, Bull came in as the head recruiter. Ole Miss wanted to put their basketball program on the map and Bull was considered the No. 1 recruiter in the country. We got the go-ahead to fix up the basketball program up good," said Daggett. "We re-did the locker rooms and made them the fanciest in the SEC. Bull brought in Mighty Mites, who were jugglers and bears to wrestle at halftime."

The B/C camp has always had a Mississippi equipment man. Daggett was followed by Fuller and Sledge. Craig Brewer, a Southern Mississippi graduate, followed Sledge and had been with B/C until Daggett returned this year.