

Williams New Catawba Coach

TH-MAY 4, 89

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Retirement didn't quite last a year for Dick Williams, the long-time coach and athletic director at East Mecklenburg High.

Just long enough for Catawba to come calling and name Williams its baseball coach.

Williams replaces Jim DeHart, who resigned last week for personal reasons.

Williams, 61, retired last spring after 31 years at East Mecklen-

burg, 26 as athletic director, and returns to his alma mater. He graduated from Catawba, where he played football, in 1957.

"I'm kind of excited about it," Williams said of his new job. "When you get right down to it, baseball is my favorite sport."

A native of Morganton, Williams signed a pro baseball contract with the New York Giants after graduating from high school in 1947. He played 2½ seasons in the Giants' minor-league system before being drafted into the Army.

Williams arrived at East Mecklenburg in 1957 and coached football, baseball, basketball, track and golf in his tenure. Shortly before his retirement, the Metrolina Relays were renamed the Dick Williams Metrolina Relays.

Now comes a new challenge. Although he hasn't coached baseball since 1962, Williams feels up to the task.

"Baseball hasn't really changed," he said. "They still try to score runs and keep the other team from scoring. There's strategy every inning."