

Taney awaits chance to turn Saints around

By Richard A. Kiley

After keeping the same head football coach for 16 years, Geneva DeSales High School has experienced its second grid coaching change in two years.

Bob Taney, who was an assistant football coach at DeSales for 11 years, is taking over the beleaguered program from Jim McNicholas this fall. McNicholas, who was 2-13 in his two years at the helm, replaced long-time great DeSales football coach Harry Furman just weeks before the start of the 1986 high school football season.

Furman, who guided DeSales to sectional football titles in 1977 and 1979, had resigned after 16 years of coaching at DeSales when he had to relocate to Atlanta, Ga., for business reasons.

According to McNicholas, his reasons for stepping down this year were a direct result of struggling enrollment at the regional high school on Pulteney Street.

"They're getting low on numbers over there; they thought that it would be easier on the kids who live far away if practice was held in the afternoon right after school ends; that might get some more kids to try out for the team," said McNicholas, who, because of his daytime job, held practices in the evening hours during his two years as head coach. "It makes sense ... I'm for whatever helps the school, but I'm going to miss it."

In naming Taney, who is retired, as coach, DeSales Athletic Director Steve Muzzi has kept the head coaching job in the family. In addition to working closely with Furman and McNicholas as an offensive/defensive back specialist for more than a decade, Taney has also coached junior varsity boys' basketball at DeSales.

Taney, 57, seems eager for the chance to turn the struggling grid program around. Last fall, the young and inexperienced Saints ended the season winless (0-8), and stumbled through an injury-riddled season (2-5) in 1986.

"The way I look at it, the only way we can go is up," said Taney, who took in many of DeSales' games last fall. "If I were to establish a goal, which I don't like to do until I see what the kids are capable of doing, I'd say a 4-4 season would be within reach. They had a good freshman class."

McNicholas said Taney, a 1950 graduate of DeSales, was the logical choice for the job.

"Sometimes I thought he deserved (the head coaching job) instead of me, but he didn't want it at the time Harry left," said McNicholas, a 1966 DeSales graduate. "He's a down-to-earth guy. I'm glad it's him and not someone from outside the school."

The new DeSales coach said he will take over the grid program minus much of the pressure his predecessor faced, but admitted that the success of the boys' baseball team last spring — the Saints won the Class C championship — might mean "expectations will be a little bit higher."

"There is a little pressure, but its different



IMITATING GREATNESS — With his tongue hanging out, a la the Chicago Bulls' Michael Jordan, Brannon Smith, 12, attempted to drive past Bob Hilburger, 12, during the opening day of Mike Ruff's summer basketball camp at Bishop Kearney High School on Monday, July 18. The hoop camp, which runs through July 29, is scheduled to feature a couple of former college basketball standouts in Greg Monroe and Joe Arlauckas.

than what he (McNicholas) had," said Taney, whose son, Jeff, played a major part in DeSales' championship baseball season.

"We were used to winning under Harry Furman, but I'm coming into the picture after two losing seasons," he explained. "I'm not coming in with the pressure that faced Jim McNicholas."

McNicholas had the unenviable task of replacing a coaching legend. In addition to winning two sectional titles, Furman's resume also included three league championships. He was also a three-time Finger Lakes West Coach of the Year and was named Section 5 Class C Coach of the Year two times. In 1980, Furman received the high honor of being tabbed an outstanding football coach by the New York State Coaches Association.

"Harry Furman would be tough to come

after; he's a tough act to follow," Taney said. "He had a certain charisma about him and he could get the maximum out of every kid. I think the declining enrollment really made it difficult on coach McNicholas."

What can faithful followers of DeSales football look for this fall? Well, Taney believes that — with the team's maturation over last year — a winning season might not be far off.

"I'm going to run things basically the same way," he said. "With a veteran backfield, we might throw the ball a little bit more."

"That would have been my game plan too," said McNicholas, who plans to use some of his free weekends to travel to South Bend, Ind., for University of Notre Dame football games. "This team has the potential to turn things around soon," he said.

Activists want company to protect workers' rights

Springfield, Mass. (NC) — Religious activists, citing possible unjust conditions at a baseball factory in Haiti, earlier this month urged the parent company of Rawlings Sporting Goods to show how it is protecting workers' rights.

A coalition that included Bishop Walter F. Sullivan of Richmond, Va., and three religious orders brought a stockholder action in June targeting Figgie International Inc., the Richmond-based parent of Rawlings, which supplies baseballs for the American League.

Religious communities involved were the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Congregation of the Holy Ghost and the Franco-American Oblate Fathers of New England.

At the Figgie International shareholders' meeting in Swainsboro, Ga., the stockholder resolution won 41,638 votes, or 2.5 percent, of the 1,633,845 cast. A similar effort in 1987 garnered about 15 percent of the vote.

The resolution asked Figgie to provide information "about its actions to ensure just and non-exploitative policies toward all the employees of the international operations of its subsidiary, Rawlings Sporting Goods."

"We lost the vote and got less than three percent," said Blessed Sacrament Sister Patricia Marshall, a leader of the effort. "That's a dramatic drop" from the nearly 15 percent won in 1987, the nun said in an interview from her

order's motherhouse in Bethlehem, Pa.

The activists will now be unable to attempt to return with the resolution at the shareholders' meeting in 1989 because "we should have gotten six percent, to be able to bring it back," she added.

Officials at Figgie International declined to comment on the stockholder issue.

Rawlings has also chosen not to discuss working conditions in Haiti. Efforts to visit the plants in Haiti have failed, the religious activists said.

"They won't let us in," Sister Marshall said. She cited reports of various conditions at the factory but added, "they wouldn't let us verify it." She added that company policy forbids visits or tours by outsiders. "We think they probably invented (the policy) just for us," the nun said.

According to excerpts of Figgie's corporate response to the stockholder proposal, the firm "pays its employees ... on average substantially more than the Haitian minimum wage. The board of directors believes that the corporation's training programs and fringe benefits are superior to those of most other U.S. companies doing business in Haiti and are far superior to those of local Haitian employers."

The excerpts were disseminated by the Washington-based Investor Responsibility Research Center Inc. The company, according to



FAIR PLAY — Religious activists have asked the parent company of Rawlings Sporting Goods to protect workers' rights in its Haitian baseball-manufacturing plant. Rawlings supplies baseballs for American League professional teams.

the excerpted Figgie response, also provides a free outpatient medical clinic at the plant and offers the part-time services of a company physician, runs an eye-care program for its Haitian workers, and has established a fund to reimburse costs of educating qualified workers' children from first grade through high school.

Sports Shorts

Shining Knights

Another stickler for statistics, McQuaid Athletic Director and baseball coach **Tim Jordan**, was also good enough to pass on statistics from this year's club.

According to Jordan, this year's McQuaid team had the best team batting average ever (.324), which is impressive in that the Knights won the Section 5 Class AAA title back in 1981.

Junior **Dave Nientemp** led all hitters with a .455 batting average. The McQuaid stand-out put together a 12-game hitting streak this season, and smashed a grand slam back on May 11 against Edison.

Keith Boeck, who will attend Rollins College in Florida this fall, rebounded from a tough year at the plate last year (.208) with a great year this year (.393). Boeck led the team in total hits with 24, including 20 singles. He also stole six bases.

Boeck wasn't the only Knight to bounce back from last year: Senior **Steve Schott**, who batted .274 in 1987, had a .344 BA this year. **Kurt Schmidt** hit an impressive .328 in his junior season in which he recorded three game-winning hits.

Bob Wynne closed out his career at the all-boys' school on Clinton Avenue with a .321 batting average, including four triples to lead the team. Wynne had a .231 BA last year.

Other impressive Knights were **John Steinbrenner** and **Todd Tonucci**. Steinbrenner led the team in RBIs with 14 and Tonucci finished the season with 12. Both hit .286 as well.

Junior **Marc Curran**, who took over the team's catching duties from sophomore Sam Owens midway through the season, was a pleasant surprise for Jordan. Curran played well behind the plate and hit .313 in the process.

Byron Schneider led the McQuaid pitching corps with a 6-1 record (2.51 ERA). The junior, who was tabbed the team's MVP after the season, struck out 48 batters and walked 26 in 47 innings.

Steve Wilmarth finished his career at McQuaid by going 3-2 and posting a 2.33 ERA. **Tony Lo Verdi** was the hard luck pitcher for the Knights, finishing with an 0-3 record. The McQuaid hurler struck out 37 batters in 32 innings of work.

John Baxter went 2-0 with a 2.58 ERA for the Knights as well.

Aquinas awards

Aquinas Institute Athletic Director **Tom Gigliotti** recently announced team accolades for spring sports at the Dewey Avenue high school.

From **Rich Pillitter's** varsity baseball squad, which won the City-Catholic League Division 1 title, **Chris Culver** was named most outstanding player, while **Mark Chapman** and **Fred Rogers** were tabbed most valuable and most improved, respectively.

Theresa Seiler was named most outstanding player from the girls' varsity softball team, which is coached by **Donna Faro**. **Kathleen Compisi** was the team's most valuable player while **Aileen Montes** was the most improved.

Tyler Gleason earned the most outstanding player award from **Bob D'Ettore's** boys' varsity tennis team. **Charles Zeitvogel** and **Tom Scheil** were named most valuable and most improved players, respectively.

From the varsity boys' track and field team, which is coached by Gigliotti, **Rick Schwan** was named most valuable in track events, while **Jack Reifsteck**, **Rob DeVinney**, and **Scott Rhoads** were all tabbed as most improved. In field events, **Brendan Doane** earned most outstanding honors. **Cory Collins** was named most valuable while **Rob Benedict** was given the award for being most improved.

From the girls' track and field team — also coached by Gigliotti — **Sherri Murtaugh** and **Donna Renaldi** were named most outstanding and most valuable in track events, respectively. **Melissa Reid** earned most outstanding honors in track events. In field competition, **Gayle Malthaner** (most outstanding), **Angela Carroll** (most valuable), and **Tiffany King** (most improved) were all honored.