

Ruff resigns as basketball coach at Kearney

By Richard A. Kiley
Staff writer

Citing increasing personal and professional commitments, Mike Ruff last week resigned after three years as Bishop Kearney High School's boys basketball coach.

Ruff, who came to Kearney from Aquinas Institute, compiled a 20-42 record with the Kings. He took over a program that had won just seven of 35 games in the two seasons prior to his arrival at the Catholic high school on Kings Highway.

The Kings were 7-13 last season, although they may have given Kearney fans a peek at things to come by taking top-seeded Newark to the limit in the second round of the sectionals two months ago. The Reds eventually squelched the Kings, 79-67, but had to overcome two eight-point deficits in the process.

Ruff said that next year should be an exciting one for basketball fans at Bishop Kearney. "That's the biggest drawback to my leaving. If I stayed another year or two, I could have watched the program really



Linda Dow Hayes/Catholic Courier
Mike Ruff is stepping down after three years at Kearney.

turn around," Ruff said.

Recent changes in both his personal and professional life have tabled his coaching days for awhile, Ruff said. He was married last year, and also began a full-time job, teaching accounting and economics at Monroe Community College. In addition,

the former Fairport High School and LeMoyne College basketball standout is working part-time for a Rochester-area realtor.

Ruff arrived at Kearney after guiding a senior-laden Aquinas team to the Section 5 Class AAA basketball final against Franklin in 1986. He was 43-38 in his four years at the Dewey Avenue high school, but continuous setbacks stymied Ruff's ability to turn Kearney's basketball program around.

"We had some real bad luck with some kids. All sorts of catastrophes hurt us," Ruff said. In addition to losing two players to Rochester city schools because of academic problems, the former coach of the Kings lost an outstanding basketball talent in R.D. Long last summer when Long abruptly transferred to Webster for his senior year.

Kearney's future on the court looks much brighter, however, as only two key players will be graduating this year. Two recent additions to the program, Rene Ingoglia and Burt Richardson, should make a

big impact next year for the new coach. Also, the JV Kings were 16-2 last winter.

Ruff said that the Kings will also benefit from playing more comparable competition next winter, and will see bigger city schools only once.

"The table is set for Kearney to have the team that can turn it around next year," Ruff said. "That's what makes it a little bit sad for me to be leaving. You always like to go out on top, but the time was right."

Ruff said he is "leaving open" any plans to return to coaching.

Kearney Athletic Director Nick Teta, meanwhile, is accepting applications for varsity basketball coach. Ruff said he'd like to see current JV basketball coach Jack Rosati get the job, but — like Ruff — Rosati does not work at Kearney. Many school officials prefer to hire coaches who teach in the school.

Rosati guided Harley Allendale Columbia to the Class C basketball championship in 1986.

Lennox propels Mooney with her pitching, hitting

By Richard A. Kiley
Staff writer

With the exception of a 6-1 victory over Nazareth Academy last week, Cardinal Mooney's girls softball team has been winning games this spring with scores more frequently seen on the gridiron rather than the softball diamond.

Paul Forte's Cards (3-0 league, 5-0 overall) are hitting an impressive .337 as a team this season after lambasting Greece Athena, 17-0, under the lights at McAvoy Park last Saturday, April 22. Not even near-freezing temperatures could cool Mooney's bats as Marisa Shackelford (three RBI) and Liz Furey (two RBI) accounted for five runs.

Cheryl Lennox continued to dominate opposing batters, pitching five-and-two-thirds perfect innings against Athena before allowing a single to Amanda Rice with two out in the sixth. Lennox retired the last four batters in order to settle for a one-hitter. The Mooney senior struck out eight and did not walk a batter.

Lennox has been getting the job done at the plate as well. After going 2-for-4 against Athena last Saturday, she is hitting .571 with seven RBI. Lennox collected two hits and two RBI in Mooney's 6-1 win over Nazareth.

Mooney's bats have been blazing in their first five wins of the season, which have included a 16-3 victory over Bishop Kearney, a 21-5 drubbing of Wilson and the 17-0 rout of Greece Athena. The Cards, who are averaging nearly 14.5 runs per game thus far, also scored 12 runs during a win against Aquinas earlier this month.

Entering their game against Mercy at Cobbs Hill on Monday, April 24, the Cards had not committed an error in two consecutive games, Forte added.

Nazareth (2-1 league, 5-1 overall) rebounded from the loss to Mooney by beating Mercy, 16-8, last Thursday, April 20, then sweeping a doubleheader from Martin Luther King Jr. High School during the team's annual trip to New York City last weekend.

After narrowly defeating MLK in the

first game, 13-12, Nazareth exploded for 18 runs in an 18-3 whitewash in the second game. Junior Melissa Creamer collected six hits during the two-game sweep.

Nicole Olley picked up the win in the first game. Michelle Morgan and Amy Attridge combined their efforts to win the second.

Olley has been on a tear at the plate early this season. The senior pitcher was 11-for-13 (.846) entering Nazareth's weekend series against MLK, and was 3-for-7 during the two-game series. Olley had a career game against Aquinas Monday, April 17, when she went 5-for-5 with four RBI in Nazareth's 17-9 win over visiting Aquinas.

April Vella has also been hitting the ball extremely well. The senior outfielder was 3-for-3 in Nazareth's win over Mercy, and drove in five runs.

Our Lady of Mercy (1-4) has been finding the going tough early this spring. Mike Baxter's Monarchs dropped a 13-10 decision to Fairport last Saturday, April 22. The loss was Mercy's fourth in a row since a 20-14 win over Brighton in its season opener.

Shabby defensive play has been costly for the Monarchs thus far. Mercy committed eight errors during its 16-8 loss to Nazareth, a factor that Baxter attributed to inexperience. Defensive miscues also hurt the Monarchs in a 33-6 thrashing at the hands of visiting Marshall last Friday, April 21.

Junior shortstop Kim Caccamise has been one of the few bright spots. The

Mercy co-captain was 10-for-17 (.588) entering the Mooney game on Monday. She had three doubles and one triple to go along with 10 RBI.

Junior outfielder Elizabeth Kowal has nine RBI for the season.

Hits have been few and far between for coach Dave Riesenberger and Bishop Kearney (0-1 league, 1-3 overall). The Kings have been outscored 49-8 in their three losses, which have come against three of the best teams in the Rochester-area — Mooney (16-3), Webster (18-0) and Penfield (15-5).

Kearney's lone win thus far came against Gates-Chili, 15-3, on April 14. Shari Bell had three hits and five RBI in the win over the Spartans.

Aquinas (1-3) got its first win under new coach Carol Jones last Wednesday, April 19, when the Little Irish pummeled host Harley Allendale Columbia, 20-6, in a non-league softball game.

Kathy Thies had five hits in the AQ attack.

Aquinas was coming off an 8-4 defeat at the hands of Penfield on Wednesday, April 19.

Over in Section 4 Class C, Elmira Notre Dame (1-1 league, 3-2 overall) blasted host Elmira Free Academy, 15-2, on Friday, April 21, behind the hitting of Mary Valent and Bobbi McMail.

Valent, a sophomore, and McMail, a freshman, had three RBI each for ND, which was coming off back-to-back losses to Susquehanna Valley and Horseheads by scores of 7-3 and 15-0, respectively. The



Linda Dow Hayes/Catholic Courier
Marshall's Lisa McNamara beats out the throw to Mercy first baseman Erin Baumer.

game against Horseheads was cut short in the sixth inning after the 15-run rule was enforced.

Melanie Crisco was 3-for-4 with four RBI in ND's second win over Athens. Crisco was 2-for-5 in the win over EFA. Bobbi McMail has pitched all five games for Notre Dame.

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