

1972-1973 Coaching Change

12 Fremont News-Messenger Wednesday, March 15, 1972

Clark Resigning As Ross Basketball Pilot



ALEX CLARK

Alex Clark, pilot of the Ross basketball program for the last three seasons, has submitted his resignation. Clark, who guided the Little Giants to a 15-44 record over the last three campaigns, presented the resignation to John Evanoff, superintendent of schools, last week. The Board of Education meets tonight and is expected to accept the resignation.

The Bluffton College graduate reviews reasons for his resignation in a three-page letter to school board members.

"This past season was very frustrating for my team as well as for myself," Clark wrote in the second paragraph. "As individuals and athletes I feel that Fremont has a great group of dedicated young men. I feel, however, that these young men and myself were asked to perform under conditions which are not conducive to promoting a winning basketball program. There is evidence of this in the past basketball records here in Fremont. What is even more frustrating is that neither the athletes nor myself have had any control over these circumstances.

"It is my hope, and the reason for my resignation, that under the direction of a new coach from outside the

community that these adverse conditions might be improved if not eliminated."

Obstacles listed by Clark included: scheduling, facilities, injury, football, stress and staff.

Concerning scheduling, Clark wrote the following: "On every practice day there have been between seven and 12 activities in the gym after school between 3 and 7 p.m. These activities include: varsity and reserve basketball, varsity and reserve wrestling, GAA basketball and deck tennis intramurals, GAA beginning and advanced tumbling, GAA beginning and advanced modern dance, GAA fencing, girls' basketball, cheerleading practice, seventh grade basketball, winter baseball fitness, winter track fitness, winter football fitness as well as wrestling meets.

"I consider the practice floor a classroom. It is impossible to operate efficiently when there are this many distractions. Number-wise we are talking of between 200 and 300 people using the senior high gym almost every afternoon."

The Little Giant cage program operated with only two coaches this season although most of the schools in the

Buckeye Conference have at least three assistants and some have four at the varsity and reserve level.

"... during this past season we had a vacancy in our varsity coaching staff after you failed to rehire one of my assistants last spring," Clark wrote. "Thus, with my lone assistant working in football, for the first two weeks of practice, I had both varsity and reserve players by myself. Not having the third coach makes practices longer and does not allow as much personal attention for fundamentals as should be given."

Despite the obstacles, Clark still believes the Ross cage program can become a Buckeye Conference contender.

"The chances of winning are as great as they were when Tim Thomas played here," Clark said this morning. "I've been real pleased with the kids that are coming back and the fellows in the junior high program.

"From this year's varsity team there will be a number of established players returning next year. This season we didn't have an established scorer or rebounder and then the two fellows I was depending on most (Bob Brudzinski and Chuck Celek) were injured in the first week of practice."

"I don't think people realized how serious these injuries were. Those boys couldn't have been expected to play to their full capabilities the first time they got on the floor. And, I wasn't going to push either of those fellows so they might have further injuries that might hamper the rest of their athletic careers. Both young men are fine athletes.

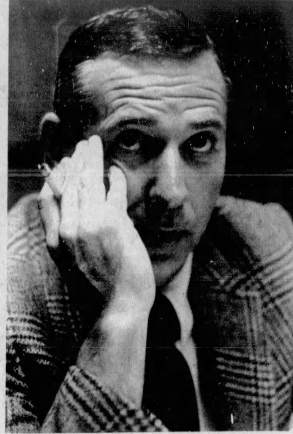
"Of the kids coming back, there are only three football players. They have good size and are very dedicated young men. A new coach can begin working with them now and can go through the summer and fall which should provide the base for a fine team next year."

Clark, who was graduated from Bluffton in 1948 and is a native of Ridgeway, hopes to stay in coaching.

"I definitely plan to stay in coaching at the high school level for a while longer," Clark said. "Hopefully, some day, I'll be able to move up to the college level as either a freshman coach or varsity assistant."

Clark has been with the Ross cage program for six years. He served one season as freshman coach before moving to the reserve level for two seasons. He took over the varsity program for the 1969-70 season after the resignation of Don Purvis.

18 Fremont News-Messenger Thursday, July 6, 1972



The Many Moods Of New Ross Basketball Coach Ken Miller As He Answered Questions From The Press

News-Messenger Photos By Bruce Crippen

Miller Accepts Little Giant Challenge

By MARK CARLSON
News-Messenger Sports Editor

It's over!

The search for a Ross High School basketball coach that began with the resignation of Alex Clark on March 6 ended last night when Ken Miller, coach at Sidney High School for the last six years, accepted the challenge of taking over the Little Giant program.

Fremont Board of Education unanimously approved Miller's appointment and also hired his Sidney assistant, Don Burgess, as varsity assistant basketball coach.

"We're exceptionally pleased," superintendent of Fremont schools John Evanoff said in reviewing the appointments of Miller and Burgess.

"I feel we have men of maturity and experience. Naturally I'm impressed with their experiences and training.

"The coaching record of coach Miller gives every indication that there was a building up of the program in the

two previous schools where he coached. I feel very strongly that he can develop this attitude for Fremont.

"I'm glad we have a man of his caliber. I feel we've analyzed applicants very carefully and worked at the selection very diligently. There were certain teaching areas we had to fill. I believe with the employment of these two men we have done well for our situation."

Miller, who resigned at Sidney earlier this spring, had planned to step out of coaching for at least a year until he learned of the Ross opportunity.

"There are many personal reasons why I resigned at Sidney," Miller said. "After quitting I decided to look around, but I wasn't going to take anything unless it really appealed to me."

"I had three opportunities to go elsewhere but none of them were what I wanted.

"Then when this job came along, I sized it up and decided it was what I wanted. I feel it is a good opportunity and quite a challenge—I've always been a person who liked challenges."

The 37-year-old University of Dayton graduate comes to Ross with a glossy 183-89 record at the varsity level. He coached for seven years at Class A Coldwater before moving to Class AAA Sidney in 1966-67.

Miller's first year at Sidney has been the only campaign where his teams have failed to win more than half their games. The Yellow Jackets went 4-15 that season but since then they have never had less than 11 victories.

The best Sidney campaign under Miller was the one just completed. The Yellow Jackets went 18-3 and won the Miami Valley League championship for the first time since 1955 and only the second time in the history of the school. Sidney was also a sectional champion last winter.

Overall, Miller's Sidney squads compiled a 77-44 record.

At Coldwater, Miller's teams went 106-45. They were district champions in 1961-62 and 1962-63. The Cavaliers best season under Miller was 1961-62 when he led them to a 19-5 record card and runner-up slot in the regional tournament.

"We had many good times and good years at Sidney," Miller said. "But I've got no regrets about coming here—I believe I will be bettering myself professionally.

"I think it's going to be a tremendous opportunity. I regard the Buckeye Conference as the best in the state of Ohio.

"Football has really made a name for itself at Ross. Now I would like to see basketball head in the same direction."

Miller, who has been married 15 years and is the father of six children, was selected as the Miami Valley League's basketball coach of the year in 1971-72. He is a graduate of Springfield Central Catholic High School (1953). After earning his BS degree in education at Dayton, he went on to do graduate work at Indiana and Miami Universities in 1965-66. He earned his masters degree in education from Xavier in 1969-70.

Miller will head the physical education department at Ross. His teaching salary will include \$11,530 for teaching plus an additional \$200 as head of the department. His coaching salary is listed by the board of education as \$1,386.

Loss String Ends For Post 121, 9-8

MAUMEE — Fremont American Legion Post 121 snapped a four-game losing skid with a 9-4 victory over Maumee of Lucas County Recreation

thrid to jump into a big lead. A two-run single by Tom Juraski highlighted the third. Singles by Jerry Yeager, Ladd Beck and Tom Hise, plus John

0. Texas at Cleveland was postponed by rain. In the National League, Los Angeles rapped Montreal 7-3, Pittsburgh dropped Houston 6-4 and Chicago split a double-header with Atlanta, winning 4-1 before losing 3-2. San Diego at New York and San Francisco at Philadelphia were both postponed by rain.

The Royals bunched hits by Fred Patek, Amos Otis, Richie Scheinblum and John Mayberry to take a quick lead. Then they kayoed Leitch, 13-4, with three more runs in the sixth. The Tigers ace allowed 10 hits and was disgusted with his performance.

"This was probably the poorest game I've pitched all year," he said. "Yeah, it was the worst. I was wild inside the strike zone."

Paul Spilltorff pitched a three-hitter for the KC victory. The Yankees got a six-hitter from Steve Kline, 7-3, to beat Oakland and Ken Holtzman. Felipe Alou and Thurman Munson tagged home runs for New York.