

1981-1982 Coaching Change

12 The News-Messenger, Fremont, O., Tuesday, March 17, 1981

Past season made decision easier

Biz Paeth steps aside at Ross

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A 19-2 season for Ross would have made it difficult for Norm "Biz" Paeth to quit but instead, a 2-19 mark eased the burden.

Either way, however, Paeth would have and did, indeed, quit.

The rumors of Paeth stepping down as Ross High School's basketball coach were officially confirmed Monday night during the Fremont Board of Education meeting.

His resignation after four years at the helm was accepted.

In his four seasons for the Little Giants, Paeth revamped a team that had produced a 0-19 record the year before he took over into last season's 14-9 sectional champs. He was rumored as wanting to quit last season but was reportedly talked into staying for another year.

He was 25-47 in that span after coming from a highly successful program that he had nurtured at Lansdusky St. Mary's.

"I thought about it (resigning) last year," Paeth said Monday, "but I probably thought about it every year that I coached.

When I did make up my mind last year, I felt that I was going to stay with it (coaching) for the rest of my life.

"Winning is like a pay day and when, week in and week out, you don't get paid, it hurts."

Paeth did not want his former players to feel that he was disappointed in them.

"I don't want them to think that I let me down. 'You didn't do it!'" he insisted.

"Even if we had gone 19-2 this season, I was going to quit. Sure, it would have been a whole lot harder, but the 2-19 record only made it a little easier."

Continuing, Paeth said, "I have been a head coach for 11 years and now I am anxious to see what it feels like not to coach.

"I am going to wait a year; I may change my mind. I just want to see what it's like not coaching. I am going to spend a lot more time with my family."

"I am not going to actively pursue another coaching job."

He also says that he will not accept any offers to coach.

"Let's face it," he said. "I'm a Fremont guy. I am really looking forward to watching basketball, not worrying about it."

"I thought the program was on an upward swing here. The only thing I feel bad about is not being involved with the kids. It's not like I am dissatisfied with players at Ross; they always tried. We always got St. Mary's worth of them. I am going to miss them but we (wife Ruth) have three kids and I will get to see more of them."

Paeth pointed out that he never regretted making the move from St. Mary's to Ross. "Oh," he admitted, "I bit my lip a few times last year when they won the state title but I never regretted leaving there."

For the present, Paeth is going to continue teaching at Ross.

"I enjoy teaching," he said, "but I want to see what it's like not coaching. Who knows, maybe next year I will be calling you to see if you know of any job (coaching) openings."

But for now, Paeth said "It's time for someone else to take the ball at Ross."



BIZ PAETH AND HIS LAST ROSS TEAM

Ross cage coach named; brings successful record

John Sawyer, 34, will be the next basketball coach at Fremont Ross High School.

Sawyer guided Kinsman Badger into the Class State Basketball semifinals this past season before losing 49-47 to Columbus Academy. Badger complied a 27-1 record during the 1980-81 season. He will be replacing Biz Paeth who resigned this year.

The Youngstown State graduate coached two years at the Trumbull County school, finishing with a combined record of 44-10. In his first year at Badger, Sawyer's team was 12-8 in the regular season and finished 17-9, losing in the regional finals.

Sawyer had inherited a 1-20 team at Badger.

Prior to the Badger job, he had spent two years at Farmington High School, one year as an assistant and one as the head coach, compiling a 7-12 mark.

"It's going to be very interesting," Sawyer said during a phone con-

versation this morning. "It will be a challenge coming to a triple-A school."

Sawyer shrugged off Ross's past history of weak basketball.

"Everyone said I was crazy when I came to Badger," he said. "We got turned around the first year and last year we went to the state tournament.

"I'm optimistic. They play good football up there (Ross) and in a school that size, there has to be some people who can play basketball."

Sawyer will bring an assistant coach along with him. That will be Dennis Holmes, currently an assistant coach at Windham High School. Holmes is also a Youngstown State graduate.

The new Ross coach operates a carter fishing boat during the summer and has a summer residence on Catawba Island. He is married to Pat and has a seven-year-old boy.

"I expect that we will be living in the trailer on Catawba," the Niles, Ohio, native said.