

Kintzel aims to shed 'interim' tag

Written by Jim Ecker

Tuesday, 27 October 2015 19:54 - Last Updated Tuesday, 27 October 2015 20:00



Bob Kintzel is already a member of the Mount Mercy University Hall of Fame for his exploits as a star basketball player with the Mustangs 30 years ago.

Now he'd like to leave his mark on the university as the new women's basketball coach at his alma mater.

Kintzel was promoted to "interim" head coach last week when Aaron Jennings, his former boss with the women's basketball program, accepted a new assignment as head coach of the men's basketball squad at Mount Mercy.

Kintzel has the type of job he's wanted ever since he left Mount Vernon High School three years ago after a successful stint with the girls basketball team there. He fully intends to succeed at Mount Mercy and keep the job on a long-term basis.

"They tagged it interim, so we'll see what happens," Kintzel said Monday. "It's my full intention to keep this job. This is where I want to be.

"Obviously I love Mount Mercy," he said. "This place means a lot to me. So it's my full intention to keep this job and hopefully I will."

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Mount Mercy University acted quickly last week after selecting Paul Gavin as the school's new athletic director. Jennings took over the men's basketball team from Gavin, and Kintzel took over the women's team from Jennings.

The main reason Kintzel was tagged the "interim" head coach is because he's never been a head coach at the collegiate level. Gavin is confident Kintzel will do a good job and become a top candidate for the post on a full-time basis.

Kintzel led Mount Vernon High School to the Class 2A state title in 2010 and a second-place finish in the Class 3A state tournament in 2011. He spent two years as an assistant women's coach at Cornell College, then joined the women's program at Mount Mercy last year.



Kintzel is comfortable with his new assignment with the Mustangs.

"Obviously I was with them last year, so I was familiar with Aaron's system," he said. "I helped recruit a lot of the kids. I was around them all summer and this fall, so I think the transition for me is probably a little easier than what it's going to be for Aaron (with the men's team)."

"I think it's a good group and we're just trying to figure out who belongs where right now."

The Mount Mercy women's basketball players had no idea a coaching change was about to

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happen until they were summoned to a joint meeting with the men's basketball team last week with Gavin, Jennings and Kintzel. That's when they learned the news.

"I was completely shocked," said Abby Herb, a star player for the Mustangs who is confident everything will be fine. "You have to adapt to it. You can't fret about it or anything. Our first game is on Friday and we have to be ready to go for that."

Mount Mercy opens against Dakota State at the Grand View Classic on Friday in Des Moines.

Herb is confident Kintzel will do a good job with the team.

"I guess it was an easier transition for us, because Bob was with us last year and he knows how some of us play and everything," she said. "I'm really excited to see where this season goes. He really expects a lot out of us. I think it's going to be really good for us."

Kintzel knows there will be a period of adjustment for the players.

"All in all, they've been pretty receptive to it," he said. "Obviously for the upperclassmen, it's tough. But we met right away and they were on board."

"It came as a shock to them," he said. "The timing of where we're at in the season and nobody was expecting it, so it came as a shock to them. We began practice the next day and I didn't see any fall-off. Everybody was on board. We had a great practice."

Mount Mercy finished 19-14 last season and reached the championship game of the Midwest

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Collegiate Conference tournament, falling one game short of making the NAIA Division II national tournament. The Mustangs are playing as an NAIA independent this season and will begin competing in the Heart of America Conference next year.

Herb averaged 17.6 points and 6.0 rebounds last season. Makenzie Zeitler averaged 9.4 points, Alisa Weiland 8.2, Ashley Dolan 3.8 and McKenna Sexton 1.6. The Mustangs brought in a big freshman class this year along with several junior college transfers.

2015-16 ROSTER

Seniors

McKenna Sexton, 5-7, West Branch

Makenzie Zeitler, 5-8, Van Buren

Juniors

Andrea Valadez, 5-6, Fort Scott CC

Abby Herb, 6-0, CR Washington

Alivia Zubrod, 5-6, Ellsworth CC

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Sobrina West, 5-8, Iowa Lakes CC

Alisa Weiland, 5-4, CR Prairie

Latasha Harmon, 5-7, DMACC

Tiana Thompson, 5-6, DMACC

Jordyn Lehman, 5-10, Ellsworth CC

Sophomores

Ashley Dolan, 5-11, Dubuque Hempstead

Tracy Kilburg, 5-6, Springville

Freshmen

Kiley Seelman, 5-6, Clear Creek-Amana

Lakin Goodman, 5-7, Morrison, Ill.

Sara Blowers, 5-7, Iowa City High

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Karli Oltmanns, 5-10, Anamosa

Hannah Mouglin, 5-2, Clear Creek Amana

Jakaila Jordan, 5-4, Milwaukee

Quenna Keating, 5-11, Quincy, Ill.

Raeshonda Chandler, 5-7, Kewanee, Ill.

Chelsey Lampe, 5-8, Riverside Highland

Kasey Palmer, 5-11, West Delaware

Kandis O'Donnell, 5-10, CR Washington

Cheyenne Pearce, 6-0, Wahoo, Neb.

Sam Blowers, 5-7, Iowa City High