

A Job Like No Other

Coaching, a fascinating career if you can keep up

By AMY KRONENBERGER
tc@dailystandard.com

As evening approached the Grand Lake area on Aug. 25, the sunlight gradually faded and was replaced by Friday night lights and the excitement only a new high school football season can bring.

I arrived at Marion Local High School at 4:30 p.m. to learn what it's like to be a head football coach on opening night, and veteran coach Tim Goodwin soon had me running to keep up with his final preparations.

Booming music from the boys' locker room mingling with the sound of the marching band practicing in a nearby field brought a smile to my face. For a moment I was transported back to my own high school years in Minster. Happily, some things never change. My smile faltered, however, when I entered the building and was hit with the smell of the boys' locker room. I'd almost forgotten. Yes, indeed, some things never change.

Goodwin, who also serves as Marion Local's high school principal and was celebrating his 46th birthday that day, met me outside the locker rooms and began telling me about his work while he walked through the halls, going through his last-minute to-do list. I hurried to keep up with him, scribbling down notes while trying not to run into walls or water fountains in the process.

For Goodwin, months of planning, strategizing and preparing a new team — most of his starters last year were graduating seniors — had boiled down to this moment. He, his coaches and players had worked hard getting ready for this season, he said. All that was really left to do was to wait and see what happened.

"It'll be interesting this year because we have almost a whole new team," he said. "Basically, we really don't know what to expect in two-and-a-half hours time."

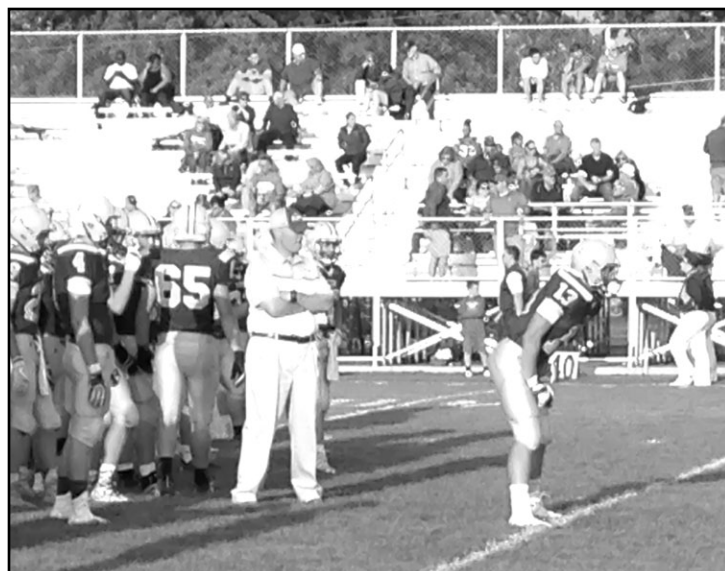
Planning and executing a season becomes a bit easier as years pass if a coach is lucky enough to stay at one school and keep the same team of assistant coaches. Goodwin, who was hired as head coach in 1999, has worked with the same team of assistants since the early 2000s. He said they already have the template from previous years and so are able to focus on fine-tuning the existing program to keep improving.

"A kid is asked to do quite a bit, mentally," he said. "That's why it helps to have a group of coaches that have worked together. ... We don't have to talk about it because we already know what we're going to do."

Every season still requires plenty of planning, however, as no player and no game are ever the same from year to year. Goodwin, who was now back in his locker-room office, handed me a list of the team's plays, all color coded and given seemingly random names that went right over my head.

"A lot of time and effort went into this list right here," he said, noting his players must memorize it in a short amount of time. "And this is just the offensive plays. There's another page for defense."

For practices, he plans which drills to use that will teach skills that either need



Submitted photo

Marion Local High School Head Varsity Football Coach Tim Goodwin, center, watches his players warm up and offers them pointers on Aug. 25 before the start of their opening game against Chaminade Julianne Catholic High School.

improvement or will be important for an upcoming game.

"Planning is critical because there is only so much practice time, and physically, there is only so much you can do with the players before they start breaking down," he said. "We need them fresh and ready for the games."

Goodwin ended our short interview by saying he and the coaches, who had since joined us in his office, were going to meet the players to view films of Chaminade Julianne's team, their opponent that night.

I gathered my bag to join them, but Goodwin had stopped at the door, his hand on the doorknob. He was watching me, an odd, smiling expression on his face as if sizing me up, trying to determine if I were up to a challenge. I merely looked back at him, puzzled. Finally he turned to his coaches and said, "I'm wondering how they'll react when they see her walk into the room. Maybe she shouldn't go with us."

Not go with them? Was he really going to make me sit and wait for them to come back? It's just a room full of teenage boys; it's not like I was walking into a lion's den — was it?

The men gave Goodwin chuckling replies, and the next thing I knew, Goodwin gave me the OK and I was hurrying down the halls trying to keep up as the coaches walked quickly to the classroom, two hours to game time. I followed them through the door and was momentarily frozen by 27 pairs of surprised eyes locked on me. In that infinitesimal moment, I was a freshman in high school again, wearing my slightly too-big band uniform and feeling awkward and out of place. I was the lone woman in a room of testosterone.

I soldiered on and found my way to the back of the room. The awkwardness had faded just as quickly as it hit and curiosity returned. I now was a member of the comparatively small group of females to get an inside look at this age-old fraternity, which historically has been strictly no girls allowed.

We watched the films, which were several short clips of individual plays by Chaminade Julianne's team. Goodwin regularly pointed out the team's strengths and weaknesses and gave tips on how best to beat them. I am a football fan and consider myself rather knowledgeable about the sport, but much of what Goodwin was saying as he drew the team's attention to individual plays and mistakes may as well have been in Greek. The players, however, seemed to understand every word as they listened intently.

The films ended, and

ones, be the intelligent team. They then all knelt down and joined hands in prayer before letting out a war cry that rattled the walls of the locker room.

In a moment they were gone, running across the parking lot to the field, and I once again found myself sprinting to keep up. The players were through the gate to the stadium and then the coaches passed through while I was somehow still 20 yards behind. The gatekeepers began to close the fence. I must have been quite the sight — a 40-year-old woman running, carrying a notebook and shouting "I'm with them!" They looked at me strangely but allowed me to pass.

Game time had finally arrived. Fans in the packed stadium cheered the players as they were introduced on the field. The warm August air and the deepening blue sky against the setting sun promised a perfect evening for football.

I tried to squeeze in among the players, marveling at my sideline viewpoint, as Goodwin shouted instructions and encouragement to his players. He was in his element, doing what he does best. He exuded a calm and friendly confidence while leaving no one in doubt of who was in charge.

I had asked him earlier if he is superstitious. He said he follows certain traditions, like wearing the same pair of pants at every game, but he tries not to become too much so.

"After 19 years, you can get into routines, but I try to change it up," he said about trying not to turn routine into superstitious ritual. "Because once you start something, you're committed for the rest of the year."

He does have one other tradition he follows every year.

"I chew lots of gum, but on game night," he said, pulling a small box of blue Extra chewing gum from his pocket. "It's always this gum, this color."

Whether luck or skill or a little of both, Goodwin is doing something right. Just over a minute into the game, the Flyers had intercepted the ball, scored a touchdown and completed a two-point conversion, making the score 8-0. The team's dominating skill continued, and took them to a 35-7 win over the Eagles.

Goodwin started the season with an impressive career record of 211 wins, 43 losses and nine state titles. Now, four games into the season, the Flyers are undefeated and the No. 1-ranked team in Division VI as they head into their game tonight against the Versailles Tigers.

For Goodwin, though, it's not about winning; it's about molding his team into hard-working, respectable and successful young men.

"Winning is just the byproduct of what we do," he said. "We try to teach them the right way to do things on and off the field and put them into spots where they can be successful. Our focus as coaches is to care about the kids like they are our own and try to help them be successful."

— To submit a comment or future column idea, contact Kronenberger at tc@dailystandard.com or at 419-586-2371.

Mercer Wildlife Area to host hunt drawing

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources will host a one-time drawing at 1 p.m. Sept. 23 for archery deer hunting at the Mercer Wildlife Area.

Participants must register prior to 1 p.m. and show a valid 2017-2018 hunting license and deer permit.

Controlled-hunt dates include Sept. 30-Oct. 22 and Dec. 30-Feb. 4.

"Participants should arrive at the Mercer Wildlife Area Headquarters at 12:45 p.m. to allow enough time to register," advised Bruce Terrill, wildlife management assistant supervisor. "We will begin the drawing promptly at 1."

Participation is limited to adults aged 18 and over. The chosen hunter may designate a partner for the hunt.

The drawing will be held at the Mercer Wildlife Area

Headquarters, 6115 State Route 703, Celina. The refuge is one-third of a mile east of U.S. 127.

Permits will be mailed to the drawing winners. The permit is transferable. Instructions to transfer will be provided. ONDR officials remind participants that it is unlawful for any person to buy, sell, trade or barter any Division of Wildlife-issued controlled hunting, fishing or trapping permit. Antlerless permits are valid for the controlled hunts. If chosen, each hunter may harvest a total of two deer during each archery hunt segment, only one of which can be an antlered deer.

For more information, contact Wildlife Management at 937-372-9261 or Mercer Wildlife Area Manager Sean Finke at 419-236-8838. For more information, visit www.wildohio.gov.

Perfect attendance



Submitted photos

The Galaxy Leaders 4-H Group honors members, at top from left, Brayden Quinn, Bryleigh Quinn, Emily Brunswick and Amber Freeman, who receive certificates and gift bags for earning perfect attendance at all meetings and activities the club hosted during the 2016-2017 year. At right, Bryleigh Quinn guessed the correct number of candy pieces in the jar as part of the attendance-guessing activity. The members were honored during the Sept. 14 meeting.



Golf pro speaks to Kiwanis Club

Kirk "Kirby" Stucke, Mercer County Elks general manager and head professional, was the guest speaker at the Sept. 12 meeting of the Coldwater Kiwanis Club.

Stucke is a graduate of the University of Findlay and is a PGA pro. He, his wife and two daughters live in Osgood.



Stucke

He said many golf outings are held at the Elks. Most are fundraisers for charities or charitable causes.

Eight high school golf teams — Coldwater, Fort Recovery, St. Henry and Marion Local boys and girls — play their home matches at the Elks.

The Fraternal Order of the Elks also sponsors charitable activities such as the Challeng-

er Baseball banquet and the DARE banquet among others.

Stucke is a teaching pro and said he averages about five golf lessons per day. In his opinion, golf is a great game for people of any age group or ability level. He explained how using the various tee boxes enable those of differing skill levels to enjoy the game.

He also brought his golf clubs and explained the differences between them and the situations in which each one might be used. He demonstrated the type of swing to use with a driver, with an iron and with a putter.

In answer to a question about interest in golf, he said participation had fallen during the recession, but interest has been coming back. He also estimated that members play about 60 percent of the rounds at the Elks and guests play about 40 percent of them.

For a Warm & Cozy Home this Fall...

KERNS FIREPLACE & Spa!

Visit Our Showrooms!

MONESSEN
Available in Gas • Wood Electric • Pellet • Corn

Over 300 Units on Display
www.kernsfireplaceandspa.com

WORKING SPAS
Over 39 years in business

Tama Rd. • CELINA 419-363-2230
Elida Rd. • Lima 419-224-4656

\$200 Rebate!

Kohler Generators!

"Why Kohler is best in class" Residential Models 14RES/20RES

- Financing Available
- Keep your cold food from spoiling and your furnace & AC up and running during ALL the seasons
- Automatically starts within 10 seconds
- Polymer base
- Automatically test cycles once a week
- no concrete pad needed
- Will run on Natural Gas or LP
- Only 1 day to install

A five-year limited warranty covers all systems and components.

Call today for a free on site estimate to install this outstanding standby generator at your home.

www.lakecontractingcelina.com

LAKE CONTRACTING
PLUMBING • ELECTRICAL • HEATING • AIR CONDITIONING
225 S. Buckeye, Celina, Ohio • 419-586-2348
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30 am-4 pm

KOHLER Generators

Awarded Top 5 Residential Sales in Ohio & Indiana!

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE
OHSHIP
OHIO SENIOR HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION PROGRAM

Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIP)
1-800-686-1578

Medicare Check-Up Days 2017

Learn ways to:
Stay Informed. Stay Healthy. Save Money

Thursday, September 28th, 2017
11:30am - 1:00pm

*Lunch will be provided

Briarwood Village Gathering Place
To RSVP, call 419-678-2311 by 9/25

Learn about recent changes to Medicare.
Find out how the Oct 15- Dec 7 Medicare Annual Coordinated Election Period can work for you.
Get tips on how to enroll for 2018 coverage in a Medicare prescription drug plan (P.D.) and / or a Medicare health plan.
See if you qualify to SAVE an average of \$3,900 on your prescription drug costs.

ODI
Ohio Department of Insurance
www.insurance.ohio.gov

Jillian Froment
Director