

Bentley got early start in coaching

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 24 November 2014 20:30 -



When Josh Bentley became a high school basketball coach for the first time in 2002, he informed his players at West Central about the "no drinking" policy that applied to all the boys on the team.

That included the head coach himself, who was only 20 at the time and a junior at Upper Iowa University.

"The drinking policy was the same for all of us. All of us followed it," he said. "It's a good thing that alcohol and I don't get along anyway."

Bentley, now 32, is the new girls basketball coach at Cedar Rapids Prairie. He succeeded Steve Doser, who resigned following a 6-16 campaign last year.

The girls basketball season for Metro teams begins Tuesday night, with Prairie visiting Muscatine.

Bentley played two years of college basketball at Upper Iowa, but decided he had a better future as a coach. His father, Jerry Bentley, is currently the girls basketball coach at Starmont High School. His younger brother, Jordan, is the softball coach at West Marshall High School.

"I realized I was a small white guy and I wasn't very quick," he said, laughing. "Coaching was always a passion of mine. I always tried to help out at little kids' camps and such."

Bentley spent two years as the boys basketball coach at West Central. Then he spent six years

Bentley got early start in coaching

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 24 November 2014 20:30 -

at Midland of Wyoming, including five years as the girls basketball coach.

He spent two years at Lansing Kee, including one year as the girls basketball coach, followed by two years at Ridgewood Co-op High School in Cambridge, Ill., where he was the girls basketball coach for one season.

Bentley also has coached football and track and served as the athletic director at Lansing Kee for a year.

"I love to coach, it's in my blood," he said. "It's been in my blood since I can remember, since I began walking probably. I grew up at the gym."

The Prairie Hawks got off to a 6-4 start last season, but finished the year with a 12-game losing streak. The Hawks graduated Madison Dellamuth, now playing at Bradley, and Cyerra Hutchins, now at Kirkwood, but Bentley thinks he has the ingredients for a competitive club.

"It's going well," he said. "The girls are working hard. We're putting in a new system. Some changes are coming that are different from years past, obviously."

Bentley declined to be specific about the changes. "If you want to see," he joked, "come watch us play."

Bentley said Doser left the program in good shape, despite the 12-game losing streak.

"It's a diamond," he said. "I think I just need to polish it. I'm not one to put limitations on anything. The sky's the limit, as long as we work and earn it."

"I think things can be done here, I really do."

Bentley got early start in coaching

Written by Jim Ecker

Monday, 24 November 2014 20:30 -

Bentley and his wife, Kristie, have four children - Tatem (12), Tylan (7), Asa (5) and Vaughn (3). Bentley is from Calmar and is happy to be living in Eastern Iowa again, near his family.

"We're thankful to be here and we'll hopefully be here for a long time," he said.