

## Mark Bliss named Prairie football coach

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Prairie High School Athletic Director Rocky Bennett has announced the hiring of Mark Bliss as head football coach pending board approval.

Bliss comes to Cedar Rapids Prairie from Ozark High School in Ozark, Mo., with 26 years of experience in education and athletics. Bliss succeeds Mike Morrissey, who resigned after four seasons to accept a coaching job in Arizona.

"On behalf of myself and my family I want to thank the College Community School District for giving us this incredible opportunity to be a part of their family," said Bliss. "After thorough research and input from close family friends who live in the Cedar Rapids area, I have no doubt we are moving to a community that prides itself on providing essential resources for all of its students to attain a quality education.

"I look forward to getting started and it will be our mission to build a program that will compete at the highest level and give the Prairie community something to be proud of."

Bliss, a native of Medford, Okla., is an accomplished veteran of the sideline with a variety of coaching experiences both at the high school and collegiate level. Bliss has been a head high school football coach for 19 years, posting a 159-57 record.

His accomplishments include four state championships, two semifinal appearances, nine district championships and eight conference titles. In addition, he was a vital part of a 62-game winning

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streak at Conway Springs in Kansas. His most recent stint was at Ozark High School, where his teams made it to the playoffs for three consecutive years including 2014.

"We are extremely excited that Coach Bliss is taking over our football program," said Bennett. "He is a man of integrity and has many years of very successful coaching experiences.

"His ability to relate with people and kids was evident throughout the interview process and we are confident that he will continue to grow our Prairie Hawk Football program to championship levels."

Bliss played football for Southwestern College in Winfield, Kan., where he led his team to the 1984 national semifinals and two conference titles. Bliss graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Education and later earned his Master's Degree in Secondary Administration from Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

Bliss and his wife, Jill, have four daughters Ashlie, Emile, Caylie and Natalie.