

Brian White named Kennedy boys track coach

Written by Jim Ecker

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Some of the top male athletes at Cedar Rapids Kennedy are going to get a tap on the shoulder from Brian White this year while they're walking the hallways at school.

Then they might get tapped again, because White will be trying his best to convince all the top athletes at Kennedy to join the boys track and field team.

White, 40, was named the new track coach at Kennedy on Thursday, succeeding Dennis Roloff.

White is the defensive coordinator for the Kennedy football program and believes strongly in getting all the top athletes at Kennedy - regardless of sport - out for track.

"The way I look at it, track is a great sport, but track will help student-athletes in any sport," he said.

Roloff served as Kennedy's boys track coach from 1997 through this year. He retired after the season as track coach, but will lead the girls basketball program again next season.

Roloff wanted all the top athletes to participate in track as well. He was disappointed this year when Christian French, a star football player who has signed with Oregon, did not return to the track team for his final season.

White coached French on the Kennedy football team and said he would have tried his best to convince French to run track.

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"To be honest with you, I would have recruited him really hard," White said. "I wish he would have gone out. He could have done some amazing things on the track."

White said there are many others.

"I've got my eye on kids in our hallways who I know haven't been out for track," he said. "I'm going to work real hard on them to get them out."

White said he plans to speak with Darius Fuller, a point guard on the Kennedy basketball team, and try to get him on the track squad for next spring.

"He's just faster than lightning, but unfortunately he hasn't been running track. I'm going to try hard to get Darius out," White said.

White said he also plans to pursue Josiah Coleman, who plays football and basketball at Kennedy but not track. White thinks track is especially good for college-bound athletes, regardless of sport.

"I don't care if you're D-I, D-II or D-III in college, you have to come in ready to go," he said. "And track will certainly get them there and help our school out and help our program out."

White said he also plans to stress weight training with members of the track squad.

White was an assistant track coach at Cedar Rapids Washington from 1995 to 2000. He also was an assistant football coach at Washington for 10 years before switching to Kennedy in 2006.

White has not been an assistant track coach at Kennedy, but said he wanted to return to the

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sport and was interested in becoming a head coach.

White graduated from Linn-Mar High School in 1989 and was a multi-sport athlete for the Lions. He played football at Coe College, graduating in 1993.

White worked for the Iowa Department of Corrections at one point, working with young convicted felons (18 to 21) who did not have an education. He also worked in the business sector for about 18 months.

White is a social studies teacher at Kennedy. He and his wife, Debbie, have three sons ages 11, 8 and 5.