

Rima casts eye on Prairie baseball job

Written by Jim Ecker

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Kirkwood Community College baseball coach Todd Rima confirmed Monday that he's interested in becoming the new head baseball coach at Cedar Rapids Prairie.

If hired by Prairie, Rima would continue to serve as the head coach at Kirkwood and hold both jobs.

"I would consider it. Yes," Rima remarked when asked if he's interested in the post at Prairie.

Matt Thede resigned as Prairie's baseball coach after the 2014 season to become the athletic director and assistant principal at Mount Vernon High School.

Rocky Bennett, the athletic director at Prairie, confirmed he has spoken to Rima informally about the job, but quickly added that he's spoken to several other potential candidates as well. Bennett said he'd move forward on the selection process in September.

Joe Yegge, the softball coach at Kirkwood, is also the head softball coach at Prairie, so there is precedent for someone doing both jobs. Rima said he has talked to Yegge about the demands of holding both assignments.

"That's been a big part of deciding what to do," he said.

Rima said he has not been offered the job at Prairie. "I haven't heard anything from them," he said. "I guess I don't know what's going on for sure."

Rima's son, Jalen, is a junior at Prairie and was a starting outfielder for the Hawks this past

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season as a sophomore. Rima is intrigued by the possibility of coaching his son in high school, but said he's not sure what he'd do if offered the job.

"I would say if we were put in that situation, we'd have to sit down as a family and do what was best for us," he remarked. "When you're around the school, you start caring a lot about what's going on there and want to see Prairie be successful."

The college baseball season usually ends before the high school season begins, although there could be some overlap in May if Kirkwood has a successful run in the junior college playoffs.

Rima has compiled a 60-34 record in two years at Kirkwood. He spent 11 years at NIACC before coming to Cedar Rapids and has won 418 games in 13 campaigns.

Rima was a four-year starter and two-year captain at the University of Northern Iowa, where he set several school records. He was an assistant coach for three years at UNI for Rick Heller, who is now the head coach at Iowa.

Rima said he has talked to Kirkwood athletic director Doug Wagemester about the job opening at Prairie.

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