Breeden tabbed as Middle Tennessee softball coach

Compiled 764-188-3 record in 22 years on high school level

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - After a national search, Middle Tennessee Director of Athletics Chris Massaro has announced the hiring of Jeff Breeden as the next Blue Raider head softball coach Tuesday. Breeden, who will become the program's fifth head coach, has spent the last nine years at Murfreesboro's Riverdale High School.

"Jeff has proven at Coffee County and Riverdale he can coach winning softball," Massaro said. "He will bring toughness and direction to our softball program, and I am eager to see the results under his leadership. I have watched his teams the past few years from afar and I have been impressed with his success."

Breeden has been a proven leader as evidenced by his 423-67-3 record with the Warriors during his tenure, guiding the school to the 2009 state championship and as high as No. 4 in the national rankings, which came during the 2011 campaign. His Riverdale squads have captured the District 7-3A title each of his seasons on the bench and three Region 4-3A crowns on their way to four state tournament appearances.

The Warriors own a National Federation of High School Sports (NFHSS) softball national record, for most team shutouts in a season (38 in 2007), topping the previous standard established by the school a year earlier by one.

He coached one of the all-time great pitchers on the national level, Cathleen Hosfield, who holds the NFHSS mark for single-season strikeouts with 659 in 2007. Hosfield also moved into third and fourth place for single-season wins and shutouts with 44 and 31, respectively, during the same year.

This past season, Breeden served as the Director of the Middle Tennessee Softball Coaches

Association and was the organization's Assistant Director in 2009-10. He coached in the Tennessee/Kentucky All-Star Series in 2007 and was a part of the coaching staff at the Middle Tennessee North/South All-Star Game in 2003.

The *Daily News Journal* has selected him as its Coach of the Year eight times (2004-11) and at least one of his players in each of his nine years has earned a Division I scholarship to continue her playing career. He supervised plans and building of a new press box, concessions, field, dugouts and indoor facility at Riverdale with a total fundraising budget of approximately $92,000 annually.

Breeden has also coached a summer travel ball squad, the Murfreesboro Firebirds, and guided the team to the 2008 USFA 18 Gold World Series championship. His annual camps at Riverdale have attracted 50-85 campers each year.

"I am anxious to get started with Middle Tennessee," Breeden said. "I believe Middle Tennessee is a hotbed for softball and I think we can build the program up with local talent.

"This is a dream come true for me. To be able to coach on the highest level, I could not be happier. I expect great things in the future for this program and university."

In addition to his softball duties, Breeden also served as the school's defensive line coach on the football staff. He coached the 2008 Mr. Football winner, LaDarius Verge, and the 2006 Mr. Football finalist, Eugene Goree. The Warriors captured the 2004 5A state crown and were state runner-up in 2003 and 2005 with him as a member of the staff.

He has taught physical science, biology and driver education since arriving at Riverdale in 2003.

Prior to coming to Murfreesboro, he was the head softball and football coach at Coffee County Central High School in Manchester, Tenn., in addition to his teaching duties for biology and physical science classes.

As the Lady Raiders' softball coach, he guided the program to a 341-121 record with two state tournament finishes, including a third-place result. The team won six District 8-3A titles and four Region 4-3A championships, while collecting two TSSAA Sectional crowns.

Before he took over the program in 1990, the school had only one win in its history. He supervised the building of the field and stadium, organized the first softball booster organization and the first summer league fast pitch program in Coffee County.

He became the first high school coach added to the Worth Advisory Committee for fast pitch softball and coached at all levels of summer leagues, from local to national, in ASA and NSA. Thirty-one of his players earned collegiate scholarships.

Breeden started as an assistant football coach at the school from 1990-97, working with offensive and defensive lines, before taking over the head coach responsibilities in 1998. He restarted the freshman football program and increased participation from 26 to 81 players.

He started his teaching and coaching career in 1989 at Morristown Hamblen High School East in Morristown, Tenn. There he was the freshman football coach and a physical science/biology teacher.

In his 22-year career as a softball coach, Breeden has amassed a 764-188-3 combined ledger. He

ranks 14th among active coaches and 16th all-time in the NFHSS record books.

He graduated from ETSU in 1989 with a bachelor's degree in education science.

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