

The good, the bad and the ugly of coaching two football teams simultaneously

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Family: Daughter, Josie (16) and Son, Hank (14)

Education: Bachelor's Degree: UW-River Falls, River Falls, WI, Master's Degree: St. Mary's University of Minnesota

University: Played 4 years of Football at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Career: Math Teacher and Coach for 21 years. Head High School Coach for 19 years. Overall Head Coaching record is 123-72.



First and foremost, I would like to thank the coaches who are members of the Minnesota Football Coaches Association. Also, I would like to thank those that are leaders in our organization. From my end, your work does not go unnoticed and I feel very fortunate to be a part. Much work goes on behind the scenes and it is a must for me to take this opportunity to thank you.

I have coached football for 21 total fall seasons and have coached 27 teams in that same time frame.

"How?" you ask.

With math, the answer was simple. There were 6 years that I coached two teams at once.

With time, the answer was difficult. There were 6 years that I devoted every free moment to football.

There definitely can be some negative connotations associated with coaching two teams at once. Some coaches would consider this forbidden and unacceptable. Football communities may have questions that hopefully you can answer in a respectful and diplomatic way. They could question your devotion and loyalty to both teams. They would argue that if you have extra time to give than you should be giving it to just one team. These are the same thoughts I battled with myself. Parents, players, administrators, coaches and general fans may not approach you specifically about their negative concerns but there may be quiet murmurs throughout the football circle that could focus on the bad instead of the good.

The main reason I chose to write this article is for coaches whom have had

opportunities to share their talents of teaching this great game but felt guilty or harnessed about doing so. Quite simply, some think that coaching two teams simultaneously is impossible. It is not. Hopefully, I can share some insight that may make this achievable for you to coach two teams simultaneously or create an easier path in your journeys. I know I am definitely not the first to do this and will not be the last.

Tips and Suggestions

Run- There is not time to walk if you are trying to coach two teams. Run off one practice field and run onto another.

Eat- Sometimes you get so caught up in the hustle and bustle that you forget to eat. I was saved many times from hunger by simply having a cooler

Significant Years of Coaching Two Teams

Fall of:	School 1	Position 1	School 2	Position 2
1998	Prescott HS, Prescott, WI	Head	UW-RF, River Falls, WI	Assistant
1999	Prescott HS, Prescott, WI	Head	UW-RF, River Falls, WI	Assistant
2000	Prescott HS, Prescott, WI	Head	UW-RF, River Falls, WI	Assistant
2001	Prescott HS, Prescott, WI	Head	UW-RF, River Falls, WI	Assistant
2008	Holy Family HS, Victoria, MN	Head	Orono 6th Grade	Head
2010	Holy Family HS, Victoria, MN	Head	Orono 8th Grade	Head

full of food in my truck and snacking in between practices while being stalled by red traffic lights. Stay healthy because you have too many people depending on you. Do not forget to eat.

Communicate- Let all parties involved know your mission before hand. If they feel notified and aware of your plans they may be more helpful and understanding. Simply emailing a weekly outline lets all people involved know you are on top of scheduling. This is a must in head coaching roles.

Share- Anytime one team benefits from the other, tell people about it. While I coached simultaneously in college and high school it was an ongoing clinic. I learned so much about coaching football in those years. Yes in the X's and O's but also in management, communication, leadership, delegation, planning, etc. I saw coaching literally from the eyes of an assistant and a head coaching vantage point daily. Even coaching a 6th grade team helped me with my coaching at the high school level where "KISS" (Keep It Simple Stupid) comes into play more often than not. Many times I have felt that the connection between teams had increased the chances of winning from one week to the next...one team to the next. When that happened I would tell people about it so they saw the positive influences brought forth by the connections. There are many interchangeable parts.

Breathe- Just breathe.

Plan- When you coach one team you are always planning. When you coach two teams it may be three or four times as important to manage your time with special attention to detail. Inclement weather can throw a giant wrench into your schedule if you are not continuously on the alert of the forecast. Make sure that your travel times are free and clear of congested traffic. One dark night just last fall, after a full day of teaching math students and coaching two football teams, I ran out of gas. I ended up running down the road to the nearest gas station in hopes they could accommodate me. I had to run because I was late for my math tutoring session with my daughter and after I needed to go grocery shopping. I got so caught up in managing the day that I forgot to fill my tank. It was a simple detail that was severely overlooked... bad planning.

Statistics and Facts

*In my 19 years as a head high school coach, our 3 best seasons were in 2000, 2008 and 2010. All three of those years I was pulling double duty. In 2008, Holy Family made it to the State Semi-Finals. We made it to the State Championship game in 2000 with Prescott and 2010 with Holy Family.

*In six seasons of coaching two teams, the worst win-loss record was 4-5 of those 12 total teams.

*During those six years, no one person complained to the best of my knowledge.

In the end

I was very fortunate to have so many good people around me to make this possible. Not only did the players and coaches make this feasible, but my family and friends helped, too. If your son is in football or your daughter is in volleyball and you want to be their coach, do not be so quick to say "no" to the idea even while you coach football. Everyone has their own balance and beliefs so if you can help more than hurt...go for it. There were moments during each season that I felt overwhelmed but in the end I would not trade any season for any reason. I think I may cherish those six years the most out of my total twenty-one years in coaching. I remember on October 28, 2000 I was fortunate enough to coach a college game and a high school game both in one day. Fortunately, we won each game. An autumn afternoon and evening I will never forget.

To all, good luck in 2011!

Speaking of Plans

This was a typical week in the fall of 2000. (C=College HS=High School)

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Sunday	Free	C-Conditioning & Film Study	HS-Coaches Game Plan Install
Monday	Teach Math	HS-Finish Films, Weight Train & Install	C-Coaches Game Plan Install
Tuesday	Teach Math	HS-Regular practice	Free
Wednesday	Teach Math	HS-Regular practice	C-Film Study
Thursday	Teach Math	C-Regular practice	HS-Film study & Night Practice
Friday	Teach Math	C-Regular Practice	HS-Game and Film Study
Saturday	HS-Conditioning and Film Study	C-Game	C-Film Study