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Coaching comes straight from the heart

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He won state basketball titles as a player and coach.



Fast-forward 45 years, and Bob Kremke is still on the court.

The 72-year-old is finishing his second season coaching Louisville's girls basketball team. The Lions play county rival Conestoga at 7 tonight in the C1-1 subdistrict tournament at Johnson, Neb.

After winning four games last year and none the year before Kremke took over, Louisville is 8-11 after Friday's 49-41 win at Weeping Water.

"We have made some progress," Kremke said. "These girls still underestimate how good they can be."

The Millard native was coaching Louisville's middle school boys basketball team when school superintendent Ed Kasl asked him to take over the high school girls team.

Bob Kremke has put his experience to good use as coach of the Louisville girls basketball team. The Lions play county rival Conestoga at 7 tonight in the C1-1 subdistrict tournament at Johnson, Neb.

"Everybody kind of wondered about it," said longtime friend Steve Daniell of Plattsmouth. "But I don't know if it's totally different for him coaching girls. He has them competing extremely hard. He's not exactly easy on them, either."

Or on referees. He's had his share of technicals - Kremke said the stories always get exaggerated - but he said there's been fewer called on him this year.

Kremke has been on the sidelines in almost every eastern Nebraska gym while coaching at Weeping Water, Papillion, Arlington, Plattsmouth and now Louisville.

His athletic resume is lengthy:

- All-state basketball player at Millard, starring on the then-Indians' 1951 Class D state championship team. Pitcher at the University of Nebraska, where his teammates included Husker football great Bobby Reynolds and future Elkhorn Mount Michael coaching legend Jim Kane.
- Coach at Weeping Water, winning four district titles in five years and the Class C title in 1961. Coach at Papillion, winning two district titles in five years before entering school administration as Papillion Junior-Senior High School principal in 1970.
- Athletic director at Millard. Coach at Arlington for five years (1974 to 1978, with an 82-22 record). Coach at Plattsmouth for three years, Bennington for four years. His career record unofficially is 298-222.



Bob Kremke during his all-state days for Millard High School in 1951

When not in education, he ran taverns in Papillion and later in Arlington and worked as a commodities broker in Lexington. He returned to teaching five years ago when he was going to renew his teaching certification and read about a social studies opening at Louisville.

Kremke commutes daily from his home in Arlington, where he lives with his wife, Charleen.

"I get up early anyway, so it doesn't bother me," he said. "I kind of hate those trips home, though, when we practice late."

Retirement isn't on the horizon, either.

"I want to go as long as I feel good and want to be there," Kremke said.