

Press Clippings June 28-June 30, 2018

---Thursday, June 28, 2018---

There were no U-46 related stories in the news on this day.

---Friday, June 29, 2018---

---Elgin Courier-News---

Sports

Dragan slayer: Dragan Teonic leaves Larkin to become the head football coach at rival South Elgin

By PAUL JOHNSON

When Pat Pistorio left South Elgin for Niles North in May, the Storm didn't have to look far for his replacement.

On Friday, June 22, South Elgin hired Dragan Teonic — Larkin's coach for the past four years — to lead its football program.

Teonic went 0-9 and 1-8 in his first two seasons at Larkin, but he brought the program close to playoff contention by going 4-5 each of the last two seasons.

"It happened really fast, last minute," Teonic said of the South Elgin job. "I didn't foresee it happening. It was too good to pass up. The facilities are awesome. And Pat did a great job with it.

"I couldn't pass it up. I just would have kicked myself later."

When Pistorio's hiring at Niles North became official, Teonic immediately contacted South Elgin athletic director Jason Ward about the opening.

"The ball started rolling fast," Teonic said. "I'm fired up about the opportunity."

Ward didn't hesitate to give Teonic a chance.

"Pat was great for the program," Ward said. "He continued what coach (Dale) Schabert started — set a good foundation for us. I've known Dragan for a few years. Him being in the district, I knew about him and I knew his resume.

"He was the right person at the right time. I believe he's the right guy to get us deeper in the playoffs. We're just ready to take that next step."

Teonic started his head coaching career at Hersey. He inherited a team that won only two games the previous three years and took them to the 2013 playoffs in his fourth season.

He then departed for Larkin, where he also began building the program from the ground up. At South Elgin, he inherits a team that went 8-2 last season and won the Upstate Eight Valley.

“The foundation is there, but each team and each season is slightly different,” said Teonic, who will teach physical education at Larkin. “We don’t have a whole lot of returning starters. We’re still building in that aspect.

“We think we can get it further. We think these kids are workers. They have a foundation of hard work. Now, I want to see how far we can push it.”



Larkin coach Dragan Teonic delivers instructions to the team during a session on Monday, July 20, 2015. (Gene Chamberlain / The Courier-News)

Teonic lamented about not getting Larkin back to the playoffs for the first time since 2006.

“I’m confident with the group there now,” Teonic said. “I didn’t plan on leaving. I was going to be all-in to get them going. They can win a whole bunch of ballgames.

“That’s the most difficult part about this. I didn’t finish it there. It was hard for me. I love those kids to death.”

Larkin’s players banded together with the remaining coaches to keep summer workouts going, with defensive coordinator Jesus Gonzalez leading camp.

Larkin athletic director Ethan Karolczak said the job was posted Monday and interviews will start soon.

“It’s all hands on deck,” Karolczak said. “Everybody is pitching in. The years (Teonic) was there, the program took great strides. Our kids play hard. They aren’t making any excuses.

“Many of our senior leaders the day they found out texted (Gonzalez) and said, “This won’t stop us. We’re still going to make the playoffs.”

---Saturday, June 30, 2018---

There were no U-46 related stories in the news on this day.