

## Press Clippings 6/24/2022

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#### The whistleblowers: Streamwood's Quentin Ruff, South Elgin's Philip Church and Newark's Kyle Anderson land head coaching jobs --- 6/23/2022

By Rick Armstrong



First-year Streamwood boys basketball coach Quentin Ruff, center in back row, speaks to the players in his program during a summer camp session on Monday, June 13, 2022. (Photo provided by Quentin Ruff )

The opportunity came early for Quentin Ruff, while Philip Church had to wait.

Regardless, both coaches are excited for the opportunity to lead their own boys' basketball programs.

So is Kyle Anderson, who is going home to succeed Rick Tollefson, his successful high school coach at Newark.

The coaching carousel continues to spin with both Ruff and Church taking the jobs in District U-46 at Streamwood and South Elgin, respectively.

They will coach in the Upstate Eight Conference, a familiar place for both.

Ruff, 26, is a Larkin graduate who played under coach Deryn Carter.

Despite his age, Ruff feels he's ready for the challenge. He's replacing Kent Payne.

“It doesn’t matter how old you are,” Ruff said. “I have playing experience and I’ve been through it. Since college, I’ve had my head down pursuing this path.

“I think as long as you know the game and can relate to kids, you can do this job.”



**Delaware's Kyle Anderson, left, defends against William and Mary's Tim Rusthoven (22) during a game on Monday, March 10, 2014. (Evan Habeeb / USA Today Sports)**

Ruff graduated from Larkin in 2013 and played two seasons [in college at Olive-Harvey](#), averaging 18 points his sophomore year in leading the Bulldogs to the national tournament.

He played two more seasons for Ferris State on teams that made it to the NCAA Division II Tournament, advancing once to the Sweet 16.

“All of us as players wanted to go out and play professionally, whether it was overseas or the G league,” Ruff said. “It didn’t work out for me, but I wanted to make sure I was still around basketball.”

He returned home and coached with Carter for a year at Larkin before spending two years as a college assistant at Wisconsin-Stout. Ruff, who has coached AAU teams, most recently assisted [Todd Allen at Elgin](#).

“I’ve been all over the place and have a feel for what it’s all about,” Ruff said. “I’m young, active and will still get out on the floor with my kids. It will be a small rivalry when we play Larkin.”

His former coach thinks Ruff can handle it.

“I’ve been here 13 years and was 29 when I got my first head coaching opportunity,” Carter said. “Quentin has all the things you need to turn a program around.

“Talent is going to come and go — that’s the nature of 95% of the programs in the state. You’re really trying to establish a type of culture, so when you have a nice group, you can take advantage of it.”

For Church, 41, leading the Storm marks a return to coaching and teaching.

He spent 14 years teaching and working on [Jim Wolfsmith's staff at Bartlett](#) before moving into administration the past three years as an elementary school assistant principal.

Seeing the South Elgin posting, Church decided to give it one more try. Three times before, Church had applied for the Storm job.

He and wife Jennifer have a 9-year-old daughter and a 7-year-old son.

“I worried if I didn’t make one more attempt I might regret it,” said Church, who got the encouragement he needed from his family. “I definitely bring a different perspective than someone who is 25.”

Don’t look for Church to be yelling and screaming on the sidelines, however. And Wolfsmith is a strong believer in his former assistant.

“Phil was my freshman head coach my first year but then moved up,” Wolfsmith said. “He was there for some of the best seasons we’ve had while I was here, and he had a big role in our success.

“I think he missed the daily contact with the kids and athletes. He was a Golden Apple Award nominee and the best teacher I’ve known in 30 years of teaching. He’s that good.”

Their rivalry, too, should be good.



Delaware guard Kyle Anderson (13), who is Newark's career scoring leader, can't stop Towson guard Mike Burwell (23) from dunking the ball in a game played during the 2014-15 season. (Doug Kapustin /Baltimore Sun)

Anderson, a 6-foot-3 guard and four-year starter at Newark, is the school's all-time leading scorer. He's married to the former Laura Johnson, the career scoring leader for the girls' program.

The 29-year-old Anderson led the Norsemen to the Class 1A state title in 2011, then went on to play four years at Delaware. He was the team captain and led the Blue Hens to the NCAA Tournament as a senior before playing professionally for two years in Portugal.

"I wish I were still playing but I just get hurt too easy," Anderson said. "Rick had a run not many coaches have. I doubt I can live up to his record, but we'll do the best we can."

Anderson has held camps and coached players individually in recent years. He spent three seasons as an assistant at Plano.

"We'll get up and down and I'll be stressing defense, which may surprise some people," Anderson said. "In college, I had that drummed into me."