



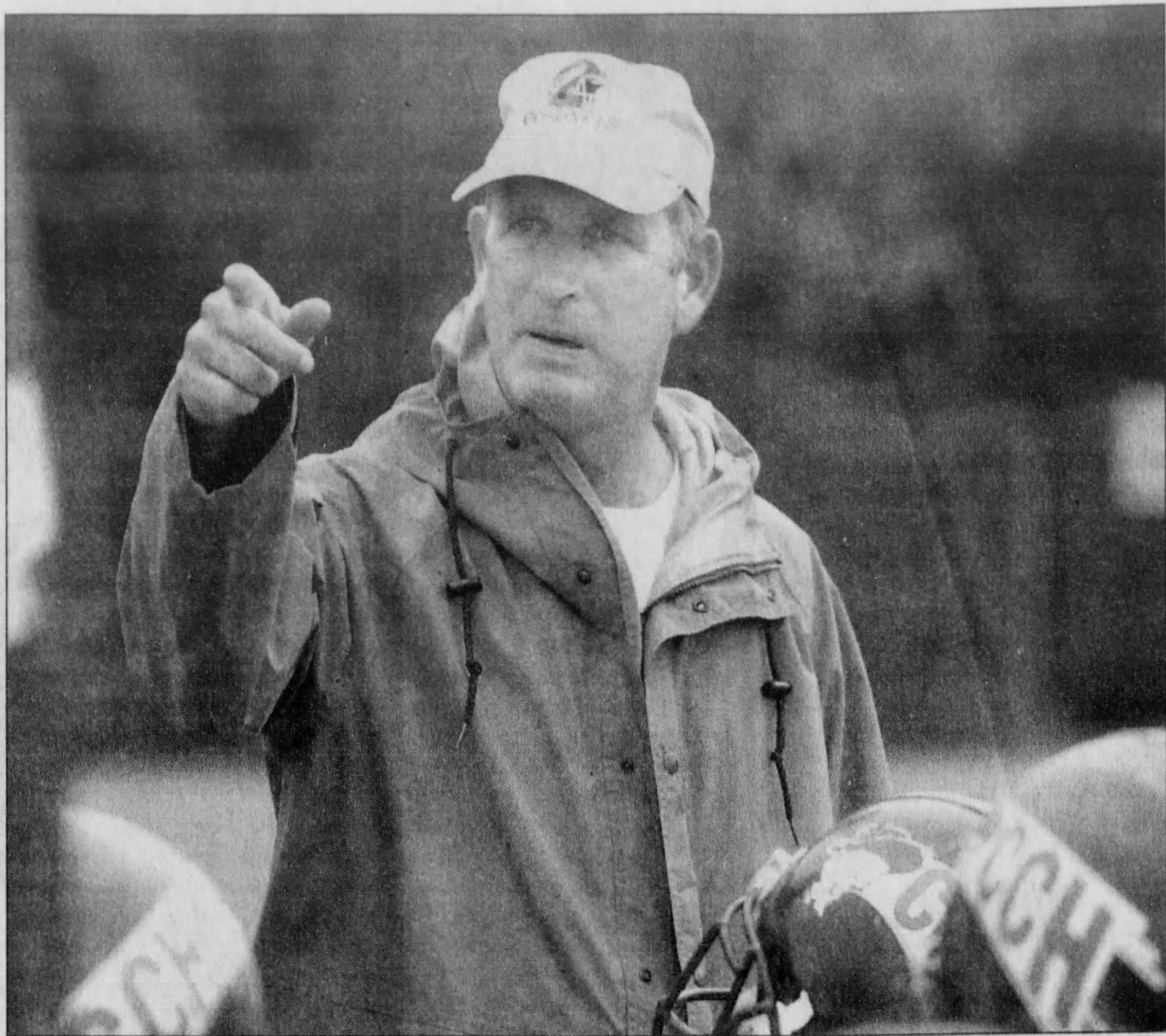
Coach Lynn Ray

Covington Catholic High School 1975-2004

The former star athlete at Boone County High School in the early 1960s, Lynn Ray accepted a daunting task when he took over coaching duties of the Covington Catholic High School football program. A struggling program in the eight years prior to Ray's appearance, there was even talk that the all-boys school would do away with football all together.

By the end of the 1980s, Covington Catholic football owed its legacy to one man - Lynn Ray. Over the course of his 30-year career at the helm of the Colonels' program, Lynn Ray amassed a 234-132 record, five Class AAA state titles and eight AAA regional championships. His career record is so significant, consider that in the little over 600 total games played in CovCath history - Lynn Ray has coached 60% of those game; of the more the 375 school victories - Lynn Ray accounts for nearly 60% of those wins. His total victories rank in the Top 20 all-time in the state of Kentucky and No. 3 all-time in Northern Kentucky. The Colonels' five state titles were accomplished in the teeth of the toughest competition in the state in cross-town rival, Highlands. Between CovCath and Highlands from 1987 through 2000, those two schools won the Kentucky state Class AAA title 11 of 14 times. Ray won his first state title in 1987 when the Colonels, trailing, 6-2, at halftime, came back and scored 14 unanswered points to defeat Paducah Tilghman, 16-6. They did it again the following year, when - trailing Paducah, 17-3, at halftime, CovCath came back to score 21 points in the fourth quarter to force an overtime victory, 30-24. Coach Ray, who was President of the Kentucky High School Football Coaches Association in 1994-95, went on to collect numerous honors over the course of his career including being named head coach of the Kentucky All-Stars vs. Tennessee (1990), Kentucky State Coach of the Year (1992), Regional Winner of the National Coach of the Year (1996), and Lifetime Achievement Award from the College Football Hall of Fame (2005). Ray has been inducted into the Covington Catholic Hall of Fame and the Northern Kentucky Hall of Fame. He is retired and living with his wife, Patti, in Florence, KY.

'It's somebody else's turn'



The Enquirer/MICHAEL E. KEATING

Covington Catholic coach Lynn Ray, who will have coached 30 years for the Colonels at season's end, is ready to let some "young blood" succeed him, possibly from his current coaching staff.

CovCath coach Ray to end 30-year stint

By **Todd Bonds**
Enquirer contributor

Over the last 29 years, Lynn Ray has coached some great players and teams in his tenure as head football coach at Covington Catholic.

But after this season, someone else will have a chance to make his mark on the program.

"I just think it's time; thirty years is enough," said Ray on his decision to make this season his last as head coach of the Colonels. "Time to get some young blood in there. It's somebody else's turn."

During his reign, CovCath has won five state titles and 10 district titles. Ray is 18th on Kentucky's all-time win list with 234 victories.

Current and former players alike are disappointed to hear of Ray's departure. Senior wide receiver Kyle Callahan could not hide being upset by the news.

"I don't feel good about it at all," Callahan said about Ray's retiring. "He's still got more coaching to do. He can win more state titles."

Eddie Tranter, who was the starting quarterback for the Colonels' 1984 team, guided the team to a 10-2 record that season. Tranter still shows admiration for his former coach nearly 20 years after he

played for CovCath.

"Coach Ray is certainly a dedicated individual," Tranter said. "He is a guy that treated us with a lot of respect, and he demanded the same."

Instead of playing a soft schedule in his final season, Ray decided to coach as if it were any other. The Colonels' '04 schedule will include not only the usual opponents such as Highlands, but also Elder and La Salle of Cincinnati.

"We've always played people like that. We've never dodged anyone," Ray said. "They're playing Colerain next year. I enjoy good competition. It makes us better come district time."

The love of tough competition is one thing that has drawn admiration from Ray's colleagues. Newport Central Catholic coach Bob Schneider spoke about a pregame encounter with Ray.

"We played over there two years ago, and I talked to him before the game, and I said, 'This is really going to be a good game,' and he said, 'I know. That's exactly what I want,'" Schneider said. "I respect him a lot. He's a great coach, and he's always had great teams."

Last year's team won't be considered one of Ray's best teams. After going 3-8 last fall, the Colonels re-

load this season with a more experienced team. Consistent with how others describe him, Ray knows his Colonels will be better.

"I don't think there's any doubt about it," Ray said. "We played sophomores and juniors last year; We'll be a more seasoned team. I'm looking forward to the season."

So does senior quarterback Drew Ellison.

"We want him to go out on top. We all love him, and he's been a father figure for us."

Ray will retain his job as a teacher, and he'll get a lot more time in his Crescent Springs home with his wife of 35 years, Joan.

"I was not happy, and I'm still not," Joan Ray said of Lynn's decision. "I tried to talk him out of it. ... I think he's going to miss coaching a lot more than he thinks he ever would."

A replacement for Ray hasn't been named, but Ray said he would like a member of his current staff to be his successor. As for what he'll be doing this time next year, Ray was forthright.

"Hopefully, I'll be working at a golf course," Ray said, "where I can play a lot and make a little money."

Enquirer staff writer Ryan Ernst contributed to this story.

SPORTS

High school coaches form organization to promote football and voice concerns

A new coaches organization has been formed to promote high school football in the state of Kentucky. The Kentucky Football Coaches Association was formally organized last month just for that purpose. The first president will be Danville coach Sam Harp. Vice-Presidents are Elizabethtown's George Lynch and Covington Catholic's Bob-Lynn Ray. Steve Bocko of Jeffersontown will serve as Secretary-treasurer.

The KFCFA was organized primarily to represent concerns of the state's high school football coaches to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association and to promote the sport.

Several concerns were discussed at last month's meeting. The KHSAA has decided to play the state football championships all on one day this year beginning with the class "A" championship at 10 a.m. They also discussed the idea of reducing the number of teams entering the playoffs back to two from each district instead of four. That particular topic has been a subject of much discussion since the idea was instituted. The coaches across the state are still divided in their opinions.

But they seem unified with the idea of not wanting to play all championship games on the same day. The proposed schedule does not include any rotation, so class "A" would always play that early morning contest. Many coaches at the smaller schools feel they are being penalized.

Another concern is the pre-season practice allotment. Of the 12 recognized sports in high school athletics, the one involving the most contact gets the fewest number of days practice before play begins. A sport with negligible contact gets the most practice.

Track and field can begin practice on December 1 and the first meet a school can run is on March 29. That is 84 (week) days of practice. Football teams have August 28 as their opening date for games. Practice can begin on August 1, giving only 20 (week) days of practice. Basketball teams get 32 days of practice before they play. Spring sports are allowed 30 days of practice.

By
Steve Merideth



The voting for these time schedules is done from schools across the Commonwealth. Schools without football programs are allowed to vote on issues that affect football. It makes sense to permit only schools with football programs a vote on the football issues. If a school does not have a particular sport, why should that school decide what those playing that sport do?

Twenty years ago, we saw spring football practice for a week or so. It served to remind the players of what they needed to be working on over the summer and it gave the coach a chance to take a second look at what would be coming up from the lower grades. But it is no more. Could the demise of spring football practice be a ruling from the schools that don't have football programs?

Russellville Coach Ken Barrett will represent the class "A" schools from the first region. Region one football covers Western Kentucky. Other representatives include Marshall Patterson from Ft. Campbell, Paducah Tilghman's Allan Cox and Dan Goble from Christian County.

Lynn Ray — Most Valuable Athlete

“Some come, some go, this life is so,” sums up the personal philosophy of the 1964 Most Valuable Athlete, Lynn Ray. This ability to accept things as they are has been of great value to Lynn throughout his high school career in athletics, for Lynn, like any other successful athlete, has learned to accept the thrill of victory as well as the bitterness of defeat—and became a better person because of it.

Lynn took an active part in the sports program at Boone County by: playing football four years, lettering two, and serving as Co-Captain his Senior year; playing basketball four years and lettering three; playing baseball four and lettering four; and running track one year and lettering one. Lynn is the second athlete in the history of the school to letter in three sports.

In addition to his various athletic activities, Lynn has pursued a college prep course of study and maintained a B average to graduate in the top third of his class. Lynn has also participated in co-curricular activities such as the Student Council, B-club, Yearbook Staff, President of the Lettermen's Club.

Lynn plans to attend college and obtain a well-rounded education which will enable him to become a football coach and teacher. Several colleges such as Xavier, Wyoming, Eastern, Kent State, and Furman consider him a top college prospect.

1963-64 REBEL LETTERMEN: Rick Riddell, Athletic Director, Pat Wallace, Ronnie Gosney, Wayne Miller, Mike Reibling, Bill Foltz, Lynn Ray, Don McIntosh, Terry Lovett, Dale Scroggin, Dick Wentz, Ned Eades, Terry Wainscott, Gary Sprague, Bob Eades, Nick Benson, Gary Barton, Jim Burcham, John Weaver, Jim McCarthy, Tom Maines, and Principal Edwin Walton.



Pat Wallace, Athletic Director, congratulates Lynn Ray after presenting him the Most Valuable Athlete Award.



GET IN TOUCH WITH US

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