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Sports

D50 Posts Emerald AD/Head Football Coach Job

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Former Emerald High School athletic director and football coach Mike Clowney resigned his post Friday, and the search has begun for his replacement. Greenwood School District 50 posted a combined head football coach and athletic director job opening on its Web site and the South Carolina High School League's Web site Monday, coinciding with Clowney's final day.

Clowney resigned Friday after accepting a position as assistant head football coach at Carson-Newman College, where he played football from 1993-96 and coached from 2003-06. Clowney opted to make Monday his final day at Emerald. "He asked to be immediately released," assistant superintendent Randy Vaughn said.

Vaughn said he will have information today on who will serve as Emerald's interim athletic director and how the school district will proceed through the rest of the school year. Emerald girls basketball coach Anarie Duckett is the assistant athletic director.

The district will accept applications for the position until Feb. 23. The start date listed for the job is July 1. The position will remain the combined role Clowney owned and requires a master's degree and valid South Carolina teacher certificate.

Several coaches could potentially fill the role, but only two Monday confirmed they will likely apply. Miles Aldridge, a former defensive coordinator at Clemson, South Carolina and Arkansas who most recently served at Central Florida, applied for the open athletic director and football coaching position at Greenwood. Aldridge said Monday he anticipates also applying at Emerald. "I guess I heard about the (Emerald) opening, and I'm

still waiting to hear about Greenwood, so I'm just trying to put myself out there," Aldridge said.

In addition, former Saluda football coach Wayne Bell, who was fired Jan. 27, expects to apply for the Emerald vacancy. Bell previously coached Clowney at Union from 1990-91, and one of his former assistant coaches, Chris Worrock, is an assistant at Emerald. "I think I will (apply). If nothing else, I'll apply and try to go through the interview process," Bell said.

Of Emerald's assistant coaches, only offensive line coach Mark Sorrow has previous head coaching experience. Sorrow was a head coach at Ware Shoals from 1995-96. Sorrow and Emerald offensive coordinator Sentell Peake said they have not decided yet whether they will apply. "It's been such a shock since coach Clowney resigned; that isn't even something that I've thought about," Sorrow said. "I didn't even know it had been posted already."

Whoever is hired to take over the Emerald program will face an arduous rebuilding project.

Clowney resigned after three seasons at Emerald with an overall record of 10-21 and just one playoff appearance. The 2008 Vikings fell in the first round of the Class AA playoffs to Southside, 74-37, to complete a 4-7 season. The Vikings' last winning season was an 11-3 campaign and a trip to the Upper State finals in 2005, a year before Clowney arrived.

Twenty-five seniors from this year's team, including All-Lakelands players Dee Parks, A.J. Jones and E.J. Wright, will graduate in May.