

THE INDEX-JOURNAL

Sports

Hill Tapped To Lead Emerald Athletics

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Published: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 12:03 AM EST

A familiar face will oversee Emerald High School's athletic department through the end of the school year.

On the heels of athletic director and football coach Mike Clowney's sudden resignation Friday, Frank Hill was named the Vikings' interim athletic director Tuesday by Greenwood School District 50.

Hill was Emerald's first athletic director and football coach, serving from the high school's opening in 1994 until his retirement in 2005. He also previously served as the Vikings' interim athletic director during the second half of the 2005-06 school year when Mac Bryan resigned.

Hill was approached by District 50 assistant superintendent Randy Vaughn to temporarily fill the role, and he was immediately responsive. "I saw in the paper where there an opening over there, and I've done this before the first time when Mac Bryan left, and they asked me to fill in," Hill said. "It just seems like an opportunity to fill in, anything to try to help Emerald out. "I spent my life over there, so I'm happy I can give something back. I love to do it."

Hill said he will be at Emerald at 9 a.m. today to meet with principal Les Gamble. He will begin work immediately.

Hill's hiring comes less than week after Clowney's resignation to take an assistant head coach position at Carson-Newman College. Clowney spent three years at Emerald, amassing a record of 10-21 with just one playoff appearance this past season.

District 50 posted the combined athletic director and football coaching position Monday and will be accepting applications until Feb. 23. Though he's agreed to serve in an interim role, Hill said he has no interest in applying for the full-time position. "I'm retired, and I've enjoyed what I've

done," Hill said. "I'm just happy I can help out in this small amount."

Hill has been retired for nearly four years, but he is still a visible presence in Lakelands athletics. Along with frequently attending area sporting events, Hill helps with maintenance on Emerald's athletic fields and occasionally officiates games.

Emerald girls basketball coach Anarie Duckett, who is the Vikings' assistant athletic director, said Hill's hiring was a smart move. "I think it's a super idea; in fact, I suggested to (Emerald boys basketball) coach (Robin) Scott and (assistant boys basketball) coach (Jeff) Thomason that they should hand over the AD role to coach Hill to finish out the year," Duckett said.

Vikings boys basketball coach Robin Scott agreed Hill was the best temporary option. "All I can say is they got the right man for the job. Coach Hill is a tireless worker," Scott said. "He'll do it like he's always done -- he'll be there every time for these spring sports whenever he can."

During his 11 years at Emerald, the Vikings compiled a 54-57 record, including six playoff appearances and a Class AA state championships in 1998. The Vikings also won 14 state championships in seven different sports and 57 region championships during Hill's tenure as athletic director. "Frank's excellent years of service in the school and his dedication were major deciding factors," Vaughn said. "He has a lot of knowledge of the people that work there, and he's continued to work with the district in doing things to help out and with the maintenance."