

# Donnie Allen to lead North Greene football program

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
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WHITE HALL - After a three-week search, the North Greene Spartans football team has named Donnie Allen as their new head coach.

He is the second coach in two seasons for the Spartans after Barry Creviston was in charge last year going 0-9. Allen was previously the defensive coordinator for the North Mac Panthers football program from 2014-2017. This will be Allen's first head coaching job in football and has 17 days until official practices begin to settle in, although he already has a connection with the players.

"I talked to and loved what he had to say. My philosophy and his merit each other well. It's a great fit," Allen said. "There are some really good kids . They got a good core, and I fell in love with the kids. It was an easy transition for me. They're very similar to the North Mac kids that I dealt with."

A native of Virden, IL, Allen played football and graduated from Virden High School in 1986. He was on the Virden coaching staff from 2004-2009 until the Girard and Virden school districts consolidated into North Mac. J.D. Lorton, a Calhoun alum was the Panthers new head coach and hired Allen to be the receiver and linebackers coach. In 2014 he was promoted to defensive coordinator and held the position up until last April.

In an unexpected turn of events, former North Mac coach Dan Carlson tendered his resignation this past February after one season. On April 25, Greenfield football legend, Patrick Bowman was named head coach. Allen wasn't included with the new coaching staff.

Shortly after Creviston, who knew of Allen from their New Berlin-North Mac Sangamon Conference showdowns instilled him to look after the Spartan's defense as the offseason got into full swing. When it was announced that Creviston would take over the Routt Catholic football program, he brought along Allen to be apart of his newly formed staff. Shortly after, Allen applied for Creviston's former job.

"When he left, I went with him to Routt, and that opened up the North Greene job. I told him at the time I couldn't live with myself if I didn't at least put my name in the hat," Allen said.

Allen already has some familiarities with the WIVC South having coached alongside Lorton, who has strong Calhoun ties, while Carrollton has displayed their dominance for the last several years.

"I was on the phone with J.D. last night, and we were talking about how much fun we're going to have during . I told him I'm expecting a full scouting report for Calhoun. He said that wouldn't be possible," Allen said while laughing. "Carrollton, you don't have to be from the to know that they're going to be at the top of it every year."

Allen brings a load of competitive coaching experience to North Greene. In his eight years of being the defensive coordinator at North Mac, the Panthers made the playoffs five times while having to battle through the Sangamo Conference, which hails as one of the toughest 2A-3A conferences in the state.

"It's been an honor to be a defensive coordinator in the Sangamo, and it keeps me on my toes," Allen said. "As far as the 2A-3A conferences in the state, the Sangamo has to be top three, if not the best as far as toughness of schedule and opponents every week. You can take a look at who ends up in the semis and the championships every year. Somebody is representing the Sangamo it seems like for the last six years."

His career highlights have come in the last couple of seasons.

In 2015 North Mac shocked the state of Illinois by going undefeated in the regular season and earning the No. 1 seed in the playoffs, ultimately losing out in the second

round. They reloaded in 2016 and advanced as far as the semifinals finishing the season at 11-2, the best in school history. In those two combined seasons, Allen's defense allowed 18.5 points per game.