Happe Appointed Head Coach Of Tigers Softball Team, Also Is Head Coach Of Girls Basketball Team

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Caty Happe was recently hired by the Edwardsville Community Unit District 7 School Board to become head softball coach for the Tigers, succeeding Lori Blade, who retired at the end of the 2022 season.



It's the second time Happe has succeeded Blade as a Tiger head coach, having been promoted to head coach of the girls' basketball team after Blade retired as Tigers' coach. In her first two years at the helm of the basketball team, Happe has gone 45-6, winning a

pair of Southwestern Conference championships, and reaching the IHSA Class 4A Super-Sectional last season, losing to Bolingbrook 56-53 in the state quarterfinals.

Blade stepped down following the Tigers' third-place finish in the Class 4A state finals with an overall record of 781-128, including a 525-98 mark in 18 seasons with the Tigers.

"I couldn't be more thankful for my husband and family for helping out and giving me the opportunity to take this job!," Happe said in a statement on her Facebook page. "Thanks to all of you who have volunteered to watch over the girls (twin daughters Chase and Camryn) and make sure they are included in the Tiger experience. Whether it is at basketball or softball games, I couldn't do it without the help of my village. Thanks to the amazing people I coach with and the administration for your support!"

In a recent interview at the signing of infielder/pitcher Avery Hamilton to a college letter of intent at the University of Illinois-Springfield, Happe expressed confidence about the softball team's chances in the 2023 season.

"I mean, we lost a lot, obviously," Happe said, "but we've got people who are excited to compete for positions, which is exciting. So, between Avery and Zoie (Boyd), our seniors returning, I think they'll do a great job with those new incoming kids to fill those positions and be ready to compete."

Happe also feels it's an honor to succeed Blade as head coach for the softball team and will bring much to the table as the new head coach.

"I know the program very well, I'm young and energetic," Happe said, "and I connect with the kids well, just like Lori did, so adding some consistency as well and adding a little bit to it as well."

A big part of the job also is helping the players land college scholarship offers and signing the letters of intent, which is always such a big thing as well.

"Oh, it's incredible for these student-athletes to get their colleges paid for," Happe said, "but more importantly, they're just great kids. And that's what we want to keep helping develop."

In her statement on Facebook, Happe also thanked all of the women in her life that helped her reach her goals and supported her during the process.

"It's always been my dream to coach both sports," Happe said. "I just read my letter to myself in eighth grade. Thanks to all the strong women in my life who showed me anything is possible!"