

Longtime CM Football Coach Rick Reinhart Announces Retirement After 48-Year Career

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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BETHALTO - After a 48-year coaching career, longtime Civic Memorial football coach Rick Reinhart announced his retirement earlier this week.

“It's been quite a journey,” Reinhart said. “It was like a movie. It really was.”

Reinhart began his coaching career in 1975 at Mascoutah for three seasons and then continued at Fairfield where he coached for 11 seasons from 1978-1989.

Reinhart then came to Bethalto and coached the Eagles for 18 seasons from 1989-2007 and earned a 97-79 overall record, making the playoffs eight times.

He returned to CM after a 15-year hiatus and coached his final two seasons on the updated Hauser Field.

During his final two seasons with the Eagles, he earned his 100th win as CM head coach after beating East Alton-Wood River on Sept. 1, 2023.

“That was a goal I had going back to the mid-90s,” Reinhart said about that milestone.

“I thought, ‘man that would be something’. I didn't think it would take two years though,” he said with a laugh.

The Eagles went a combined 3-15 the last two seasons. His 100th win at CM was also his last.

In between stints at CM, Reinhart coached at Marquette Catholic, Collinsville, and Tuscola.

He was head coach of the Explorers for one season in 2007, making the playoffs and ending the season at 6-4. He says that he planned on staying at Marquette for a while but heard there was a position that opened up at his alma mater.

“A bunch of people from Tuscola called me up and I was like why not,” Reinhart said.

He then went back to his hometown and coached the Tuscola Warriors. Reinhart coached them for seven seasons from 2008-2015, notching an overall record of 61-25 with six playoff appearances and a state championship. Reinhart won the Class 1A championship in 2009, beating Lexington 14-7 in the title game in Champaign.

While at Tuscola, he earned his 200th career win as head coach on Sept. 26th, 2014.

“Without a doubt, those years there were incredible,” he said. “It couldn't have worked out any better.”

After that, he coached briefly at Collinsville for three seasons until 2018 before retiring: for the first time.

The retirement was brief, and he began coaching again. He went back to CM and worked under head coach Mike Parmentier before taking over the head coach position in 2022.

Before Reinhart ever dreamt of coaching, he was playing.

He played football at Tuscola before walking on at the University of Illinois to play under head coach Bob Blackman and offensive coordinator Carl Meyer.

“They were very good for me, Reinhart said, “very instrumental in me having a good career.”

Reinhart explained that the farm he grew up on was just a 20-mile straight shot from U of I, so when Tuscola won the state title in 2009, it was essentially a home game he explained.

Winning that state title came just a week after Reinhart’s mother passed away. He said that his parents never missed a beat and that she was the first one to call after every game.

He wanted to make sure and thank his family immensely.

“When you're a head coach, that is not only a commitment by you, but your family, your wife,” he said. “Props to all my family members. They've always been behind me.”

After a 213-win career, Reinhart resides in both the Illinois Football Coaches Hall of Fame and the St. Louis Metro Coaches Hall of Fame.

He was just the 48th head coach of all time to reach the 200-win milestone.

Now, away from coaching, Reinhart still loves being involved in students’ lives. He’s still a P.E. teacher at the middle school and has no plans of giving that up soon.

Reinhart, 70, also stays active himself and goes to the gym regularly. He said that he’s always liked lifting weights and has been pretty consistent.

“As you age, you either use it or lose it,” he said.