



Saint Viator Introduces School's First Full-Time Strength and Conditioning Coach

August 12, 2010



Matt Saey, Saint Viator High School's first full-time strength and conditioning coach.

Athletes at Saint Viator High School reported for their first day of practices on Wednesday only to find a new coach among their ranks: Matt Saey, the school's first full-time strength and conditioning coach.

School officials announced his hiring after fundraising at their Million Dollar Classic golf outing in June. Donors rallied around the idea of adding a full-time coach, who would be based in the Murphy Wellness Center, which houses an indoor running track and a weight training and aerobic facility.

To the best of their knowledge, Saint Viator officials believe Saey will be the only full-time coach devoted to strength and conditioning in the Northwest suburbs, as well as the only one in the

East Suburban Catholic Conference.

Athletic Director Tim Carlson says adding a full-time strength and conditioning coach will give students more effective training sessions, as well as the skills they need for lifetime fitness.

"As high school sports become more competitive," Carlson says, "this will allow our students the resources to become faster and stronger as they work to continue the tradition of success in athletics here at Saint Viator."

Saey comes to Saint Viator from the University of Illinois at Chicago where he served over the last four years as the primary strength and conditioning coach for the men's basketball team.

However, he also oversaw training for the UIC volleyball, cross country and track teams, tennis and swimming teams. He also assisted with the men's soccer, women's basketball, baseball and softball teams.

Prior to working with the Flames at UIC, Saey served as a strength and conditioning intern for DePaul University, while working in the off-seasons for the football and men's basketball teams at his alma mater, Western Illinois University.

"This is an exciting chance that not a lot of coaches get," Saey says. "It's an opportunity to train these kids the right way, right from the start."

Saey describes his goal of "building from the ground up," of teaching student athletes the fundamental movement drills, or agility-based conditioning and resistance training that will carry over into their individual sports.

"It's all about movement, and moving in an open space," Saey says, "and understanding where you can make improvements."

He hopes to work with athletes one to two days a week while they are in season, and two to four days a week during the off-season.

Saey is a certified strength and conditioning specialist and a sports performance coach certified by USA Weightlifting, while also having his certification in Heartsaver CPR/AED.

While he knows many athletes will be interested in learning more about weight training and adding volume to their muscle mass, Saey hopes to teach them about the progression it takes to get there.

He stresses that each athlete's workout will be tailored around their individual sport and that educating them about wellness and fitness will be as important as the strength training.

"I just hope it frees up the coaches more," Saey says, "to focus on practices and performance on game day."