



Saint Viator Announces New Boys Head Basketball Coach

May 25, 2011



Saint Viator's new head basketball coach, Mike Howland, at a game earlier this year. He served as an assistant under Joe Majkowski.

After an exhaustive search, in and out of the building, Saint Viator High School officials announced Monday that Mike Howland will take over as their new head basketball coach.

Howland, 30, served as assistant coach for eight years under 24-year coach Joe Majkowski whom he calls a “mentor” and a tough minded defensive coach. Majkowski retired in April after a career that included 367 wins and 280 losses.

The Rev. Robert M. Egan, C.S.V., president, described the excitement surrounding the announcement.

“We’re thrilled to name Mike as our head coach. He has been part of our program and brings an enthusiasm that will be contagious,” Egan said. “Most of all, though, as an alum, Mike brings a passion for the mission and tradition of Saint Viator High School.”

Howland graduated from Saint Viator in 1998. Playing under Majkowski, he was a four-year starter and named to two All-Area teams before being named MVP and player of the Year in the East Suburban Catholic Conference.

At DePauw University in Greencastle, IN, Howland played point guard for the Tigers alongside Brad Stevens, coach at Butler University who this year led his Bulldogs to their second successive final four appearance.

“We both had the same upbringing, so in that sense I guess we have the same philosophy,” Howland says. “We both played for the same coach, Bill Fenlon, who has coached there a long time.”

In an interview with DePauw’s student newspaper in April, in advance of Butler’s championship appearance, Fenlon talked about coaching Stevens --- and the players around him -- during his senior year, 1999, when Howland was a freshman and the starting point guard.

“That group, with those freshmen when he was a senior, was the group that ended up about three possessions away from the Final Four,” Fenlon said, “and ranked as high as No. 2 and finished the season ranked No. 4 in the country. It was as good of a team I’ve ever had in my time here.”

Howland says he hopes to impart that same intensity with his Saint Viator players when he hits the courts in two weeks at the start of summer basketball camps.

“We’re going to play fast --- and be on the attack,” Howland says.

Tim Carlson, athletic director, said that administration members were impressed with Howland’s passion for the game and respect for the Viatorian mission.

“He talked about doing it the ‘Viator way,’” Carlson said. “He talked about playing hard, playing the right way, about being disciplined on and off the court, and being an active participant in the community at large.”

As an assistant, Howland began designing more of the Lions’ offensive schemes, moving the team to a more up-tempo, dribble, drive-and-shoot style. He hopes to build on that speed and quick shooting style if they are to take it up a level in the competitive ESCC.

“We have to get tougher,” Howland says, “both mentally and physically. Going in next year, we’ll have just as much talent as any of the upper echelon teams. We’re going to be smaller, but then we’re always smaller. We just have to be tougher to make up for it.”

Howland is an Arlington Heights native, whose father ran a local butcher shop. He now works as a commodities trader in Chicago, which offers flexible hours allowing him to run a boys’ basketball program with up to 85 student athletes.

“I couldn’t be more excited,” Howland says. “I’ve always had this dream of taking the program over when Joe was done. And now it’s here. I feel like I’m ready.”