

It has been a season of hires, fires and waiting games in the world of football coaches this year. Another one can be added to the list as Salem High School Athletic Director Mo Moriarity was hired to be the Bloomington South Head Coach and assistant AD at that corporation's school board meeting Monday (Dec. 10).

Moriarity stepped down from his position as head football coach at Salem in early November. At the time he said the job of being the school's AD and the death of former AD Randy Johnson had taken away his desire to coach.

After a few weeks away from the game, Moriarity said the desire to return to the sidelines was back.

"I really thought at that point (when the desire returned) once the new coach was in place (at Salem) and he had some time to get a year under his belt I would return to be an assistant if he'd have me," Moriarity said.

At about the same time, Moriarity said he was contacted by Bloomington South and after a number of lengthy conversations, he decided to return to the program that he led to two state championships.

"What it kind of boiled down to honestly is that we lived there (Bloomington) for 19 years and we've got family there," Moriarity said, "the opportunity presented itself to return home. I could tell after some time, I still had some of that (the desire to coach) in me."

Superintendent of Salem Community Schools Dr. Lynn Reed said she was unhappy and surprised when she learned of the possibility of Moriarity leaving.

"I was very disappointed," she said. "When you have relatively new people on staff and they don't stay too long it becomes a burden on the corporation, because of the amount of training that goes in to getting people used to the system. Every school systems have different systems, so it's not about just knowing how to do something it's about knowing how to do it the Salem way.

"I am disappointed in knowing we are going to have to start over with a new athletic director."

Reed said her surprise about him leaving because of what Moriarity told her when he stepped down as football coach.

"I was surprised, because he had told me that he wanted to be finished with coaching," she said. "He said he was at a different juncture in his career.

Moriarity said another thing that factored into the decision is how hard of a time he has had dealing with the death of Johnson.

"I think what people don't realize is that Randy was 100 percent the reason I came here," he said. "Not 99 percent! He is 100 percent the reason I came here! Randy contacted me and did a great job of selling Salem and that's why I came. When Randy passed, I wasn't sure what the future was going to hold. His passing was a big part of everything."

Board Member Jason Pepmeier said after Moriarity stepped down as football coach in November that they hoped to have a coach in place by the middle of January.

Now the school can add an athletic director to the search.

Reed said that time-line will not change. She said they will remain on schedule in their search

for a new football coach.

Reed said she also got permission from the board to begin the AD search and begin looking for a replacement before the board meets again on January 14.

Moriarity said he thinks the AD opening will help in the search for a football coach more than it will hurt.

“By having the AD position, you can possibly have a current teacher become an athletic director and you open up a teaching position for a coach,” he said. “One way or the other there is more flexibility with this position open.”

Moriarity said he will finish the school year at Salem before beginning work at South.

The Washington County Edition broke the story of Moriarity returning to Bloomington locally on Monday (Dec. 10) afternoon as rumors started to build about him being named head coach at Bloomington South.

Moriarity declined to comment until after BSHS’s school board meeting that night, but a pep-rally was already planned to introduce him once the vote was final.

He said he has enjoyed his time in Salem and doesn’t have any regrets about his time here.

“I’ve learned a lot here that, hopefully, will help me,” he said. “It’s the first time I came into a situation where a program was as low as it was. I learned a lot – some good and some not – but I think I learned some things that will help me with my next job.”