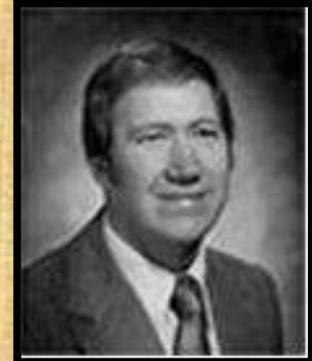


Coach Mike Currence 1976 - 1984 – Won 79, Lost 16, Tied 2

Currence is Tiger coach Highly successful at Lakewood St. Edward

Michael L. Currence, coach of Lakewood St. Edward High School the past two years, will be Washington High School's head football coach, succeeding Chuck Shuff, who resigned last month.



The announcement was made today at a press conference called by Supt. Of Schools Louis Young, who said he would recommend that the Board of Education of the Massillon School district employ Currence at its next regular meeting June 14.

Young said Currence was the “top man on the composite sheet of our technical committee and board of education. The final decision is that of the board, but, in this case, my recommendation does concur with the board of technical committees composite recommendations.”

Mike Currence - Massillon Record

Year	Won	Lost	Tied	Points	
				Mass.	Opp.
1976	8	2	0	121	51
1977	8	2	0	281	95
1978	9	0	1	278	39
1979	10	1	0	302	36
1980	10	2	1	335	166
1981	7	3	0	212	94
1982	12	1	0	369	110
1983	9	1	0	282	57
1984	6	4	0	185	149
Total	79	16	2	2365	797

Winning Percentage
83.2%

Young, who himself is a former football star (Ohio State University), is confident that Currence can get the job done here. “I feel he will turn us around and will give the fans exciting football,” he said. “I am happy that he is willing to come to Massillon.”

Currence, who is 36 years old was selected from a long list of applicants for the position. Many hours were spent screening and interviewing the applicants, narrowing the list, until finally Young felt he was in a position to make his recommendation.

Currence has the credentials. He was voted Associated Press "Coach of the Year" in 1975, when he produced the first undefeated team in St. Edward's history

His team was rated No. 1 in both the AP and UPI polls, and went into the playoffs with a 10-0 record. It defeated Newark 19-7 in the semifinals but was defeated by Cincinnati Moeller 14-12 in the championship game. His 1974 team was 9-1 giving him a 20-2 record for his two years at St. Edward. His 1974 team was co-champion of the Crown Conference, and his 1975 team was champion.

During the 1975 season, St. Edward defeated Lakewood 14-0, St. Ignatius 35-14, Cleveland East 35-6, Warren Western Reserve 56-28, Barberton 15-13, Padua 36-15, Cincinnati Princeton 22-6, Cathedral Latin 43-6, Cleveland St. Joseph 35-14 and Youngstown Ursuline 35-8.

The Tiger coach to be was an assistant football coach at Carey Exempted Village Schools and Sandusky before becoming head coach at Westlake Public Schools in 1970. While at Sandusky he served as freshman coach under Earle Bruce and Bob Seaman, both of whom later became coaches of the Massillon Tigers.

In four years at Westlake his teams were 27-10 and the school was next to the smallest in its league, the Southwest Conference. Football revenue increased 45 per cent in the four years, the Westlake Booster Club membership increased 500 per cent and the booster club revenue increased from \$500 to \$10,000 a year, according to figures submitted by Currence in information accompanying his application for the local position. His first team at Westlake was conference co-champion, the school's first championship in nine years. His 1972 and 1973 teams repeated as co-champions. He was 8-1 his first year (1970), 5-4 the second, 7-2 the third and 7-3 the fourth.

Currence is 6-3 and weighs 211 pounds. He played football at Rivesville High School, Rivesville, W. Va., from which he graduated in 1957. In high school he captained both football and basketball teams and was All-State honorable mention in 1957. He was an All-Conference end at Fairmont State College, Fairmont, W. Va., from which he graduated in 1961. He lettered four years in football and two years in basketball.

He received his master's degree in 1971 from Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.

Massillon legend still flourishing

By Peter T. Madrid
USA TODAY

They love their football at Washington High School in Massillon, Ohio. So much, in fact, that when a boy is born at Massillon Community Hospital, the school's booster club gives the infant's parents a little, rubber football.

And why shouldn't they love it? The program's success was launched by former coaching great Paul Brown and now there are only three football teams in the state with greater attendance figures: Ohio State University, the Cleveland Browns and the Cincinnati Bengals.

"Everybody in the community is interested in the program," said Brown, who coached Washington from 1932-40. "It's so great that the interest feeds on itself."

In 1940, Washington drew more than 182,000 people to its games; an average of 18,200 a game for a town that at the time had a population of 26,000. It generated more than \$100,000 in revenue that year.

But special problems still exist. Massillon, a steel town, is one of many Ohio cities feeling the effect of the USA's struggling economy.

"With declining jobs, you lose enrollment," said Washington coach and athletic director Mike Currence. "And one of the most difficult things to do is to stay on top of your sport, because the competition gets better every year."

Fortunately for Washington, its woes have been few. In Barberton, Ohio, for example, Currence said some programs are running on volunteer money. He has been able to pay coaches' salaries through gate receipts. And when Brown was coach, he used extra money to create the Washington Fund, which is still used to finance athletics at the school.

"We might be able to withstand this financial crunch," Currence said, "But we support 15 other (sports) programs as well."

On the field it's another story. Washington has one of the USA's most successful high school football programs: It has won 79.6 percent of its games since 1894, including 22 Ohio state championships.

"We do everything to promote football, as well as other sports," Currence said. The school even runs elementary football camps for youngsters in the summer. "At Massillon, kids come first," he said.

Massillon magic

The mystique that surrounds the Massillon Washington High School football program started with football legend Paul Brown. Here are some of the program's highlights:

- Washington and Cleveland Catholic Latin hold the all-time Ohio high school regular-season single game attendance record of 51,000 fans in 1945 at Cleveland's Municipal Stadium. And last year's crowd of 31,409 at the Division I state title game between Washington and Cincinnati Moeller is the all-time Ohio play-off record.
- Since 1932, the start of the "modern era," 6,262,714 fans have watched Washington High School play.

- Washington has an overall record of 583-148-35 since 1894, including 20 undefeated teams.
- Nine times Washington has been selected national scholastic champion the last time in 1961.
- Against out-of-state opponents, Washington is 25-3 with 10 shutouts.

REVIEWING THE MICHAEL L. CURRENCE YEARS HEAD FOOTBALL COACH AT MASSILLON WASHINGTON, 1976-1984

By James C. DeLong, Special Features Editor

Coach Mike Currence took charge of the Massillon football fortunes on May 29, 1976 when the late Louis Young, then superintendent of schools submitted Currence's name as his personal recommendation to the local board of education.

The football-wise Young, with a gridiron background that included playing experience at Canton, McKinley in 1934 and at Ohio State in 1936-37-38 and later as a successful coach at former Jones Junior High School here knew what the Tigers required. He was well aware that the Tigers had just put together the two worst back-to-back grid seasons (6-4-0 in 1974 and 6-3-1 in 1975) since the "modern era" of football had started here in 1932 under coach Paul Brown.

Young then compiled a list of candidates that included former Tigers players then in the coaching ranks, selected high school head coaches, assistant college head coaches and head college coaches. What led Young to the selection of Currence included Mike's excellent understanding of the passing game, a total of six years as a head coach with a combined record of 47-12 at Westlake and Lakewood St. Edwards and his ability to demolish in 1975 Warren Western Reserve, at the time Ohio's number one scholastic football team, by a 56-28 score.

Other information on Currence established that he came out of little Rivesville, West Virginia as an outstanding student-athlete and was later an all conference receiver at Fairmont State College, Fairmont, West Virginia. In college, Mike, a mathematics major, was known by his team mates as a "coach on the field."

After graduating from Fairmont in 1961 Mike moved to Ohio where there are more than 700 high school football teams. Initially he was an assistant coach in 1961-62 at Carey Exempted Village and then from 1963-69 as an assistant at Sandusky High School. In his first year at Sandusky he served as an assistant coach to Earle Bruce, then head coach of the Blue Streaks.

Westlake, in suburban Cleveland, gave Currence in 1970 his first opportunity to become a head football coach. Midway through his tenure at Westlake, Mike was discouraged by his low scoring offense and decided there must be a better way to score points than from the standard T formation.

With that in mind, Currence traveled to Middleton during the off season to spend a day conferring with Glenn (Tiger) Ellison, then head football coach at Middleton High School. Ellison had been the recent inventor of the "run and shoot" formation and had also written a book on the subject. With double slotbacks this formation was designed to give the quarterback more receiving targets.

Currence departed from Middleton with Ellison's working knowledge of the "run and shoot" and a copy of the latter's book on the subject. He immediately installed the "run and shoot" and it proved to be a potent weapon as his 20-2-0 record at Lakewood St. Edwards included two victories each over Cleveland St. Ignatius and Cincinnati Princeton in addition to the 56-28 pounding of Warren Western Reserve.

On his arrival in Massillon in early June, 1976, Mike quickly assured the Tiger fans he would give them a stepped up passing attack that would put more excitement into the offense. This came soon as Mike, without delay, set forth his plan for Massillon football. It would be two platoon football, featuring the unconventional "run and shoot" with some I formation plays and a fifty or 5-2 defense. In the "run and shoot" the Tigers would now normally have four possible receivers on each passing play.

His offense was very attractive to potential quarterback with an opportunity to showcase one's passing skills. This was established by fine season long performances by Brian DeWitz, Dave Everhart, Brent Offenbecher, Bill Scott, Mike Scott, Rick Spielman and others. Eric White, was a quarterback in development when Currence concluded his career here.

Currence recently remarked that it takes good talent to have fine teams and the players must want to play under the coach's system. This was proven here by the plethora of players wanting to play here under the fertile mind of Mike Currence.

Mike, your record in both football and academics speaks for itself.

Currence's Achievements with the Tigers

- Most games as a Massillon head coach – 97
- Only Massillon Coach to advance Tigers to Div I OHSAA Finals – 1980, 82
- Most victories by Massillon coach over Canton McKinley – 7
- Second only to Paul Brown's 80 wins as Massillon coach – 79
- Second only to Paul Brown's total points scored of 3,210 – 2,362
- Most victories in a single season by a Massillon coach – 12
- Average number of losses per season in nine year tenure here (ties excluded) – 1.78
- All American Conference record – 13-1-1
(Members – Alliance, Canton McKinley, Massillon Washington, Niles McKinley, Steubenville and Warren Harding, 1976 through 1978.)