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Coach Crandall resigns

Summary: UMM head football coach Ken Crandall has announced that he will resign effective December 20. Crandall will assume the head football coaching position at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas.

(December 14, 2006)-Ken Crandall, head football coach at the University of Minnesota, Morris, has announced that he will resign effective December 20. Crandall, who coached the 2006 UMM Cougar football team to its first-ever Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC) championship and its first conference championship since 1986, will assume the head football coaching position at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas.

“This was probably the toughest decision Jodi and I have ever had to make,” said Crandall. “Our time here in Morris and at the University of Minnesota, Morris has been just wonderful.”

At some point in their career coaches try to move closer to their families,” said Crandall. “That’s what we want to do.” Crandall is originally from Colorado. His wife, Jodi, is from Kansas. The Crandalls have three sons: Blake, Tyler and KC.

“we appreciate all the hard work that Kenny put into the football program over the years. We will miss him and I am sure all of us want to wish him and his family happiness in their new location,” said UMM Athletic Director Mark Fohl. “We wish Kenny the best in his new coaching job.”

“Coach Crandall had a vision for success for Cougar football when he became head coach in 1998,” said Sandra Olson-Loy, UMM vice chancellor for student affairs. “I’m not sure others could see it at that point, but Ken did. It’s been exciting to see our campus, our athletic program and our football team do the work needed to realize that vision. Ken provided the leadership to rebuild Cougar football to a place of pride and excitement. We are very proud of this Cougar football program and all that they have accomplished.”

Crandall was named the 2006 UMAC North Division and Conference Coach of the Year. He led the Cougars to their first-ever UMAC championship with a thrilling 27-20 come from behind overtime win over Rockford College at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome in Minneapolis.

But to this head coach, his personal success is not the topic:

“The players have been tremendous they always gave the best effort they could give on any given Saturday,” said Crandall. “Our memories will last forever from losing streaks, to breaking streaks, to winning a championship. These are some of the best student-athletes in the country and we will miss them.

“The campus support has been tremendous for the past 11 years. From the administration, faculty, staff, students and
alumni, I always felt like we were working toward the common goal.

With regard to the community, Crandall said: “If I could only mention all the people who have supported the UMM football program from afar. Their support has been unmatched and I am only grateful to have shared the time I have here with them.”

Crandall came to UMM in 1996 as an assistant coach and was named head coach for Cougar football in 1998. He has a 22-73 record as a head coach in nine seasons, with a 21-20 record over the last four seasons. With 21 wins, Crandall is one of the “winningest” head coaches at UMM exceeded only by former head Cougar football coaches Al Molde (51-19-1) and Mike Simpson (29-13-1).

Under Crandall and his assistant coaches, Cougar football achieved a 7-3 record this past season, the first winning season since 1989 (6-4) and most wins since 1986 (7-1-2).

“I have watched the Cougar football team with pride and pleasure this fall. Coach Crandall has provided remarkable leadership for an equally remarkable group of young men,” said UMM Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson. “We will miss Kenny and wish him and his family well as they move on to new opportunities closer to their extended families. This is a team that many individuals will be eager to lead and I am confident that we will have a very competitive field of applicants for our new head coach.”

“Our next football coach inherits a strong program. We're ready to continue our success in the UMAC and are moving toward strength in the NCAA Division III. We have great students returning to the team next year and good recruits joining them,” added Olson-Loy.

“We will be making the decision very soon about how we will proceed to fill the position of head football coach,” said Fohl.

“My only hope is that the next head football coach at UMM will have the opportunity to experience the same enthusiasm and drive that we received from everyone connected with UMM and the Morris community,” said Crandall.

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