

Valentine begins rebuilding at SC

GREENWICH — The biggest problem facing Scott Valentine is learning the names of his new players at South Central.

"I think it's important to learn the first names," said Valentine, who was hired as head coach just before summer practices began.

"I had the kids' first names added on the helmets so I could get to know what was going on," Valentine continued.

Valentine was a last-minute replacement for the Trojans after Don King left to accept a position as principal in the North Baltimore school district.

"I helped with a fitness test at (Ashland) Crestview in the morning, had my second interview later the same day and got this job that evening," said Valentine. "On the next day, I was here trying to get to know my players."

Valentine, who will teach elementary physical education, is taking over a program that was winless in 1987. Plus, he only has three years of assistant coaching under his belt.

But lack of experience is not a problem for the Ashland College graduate because his father, John, was the defensive coordinator for the Eagles.

"When I think about experience, I think about being around a football field since I was five," said Valentine. "I've learned a lot about the game from my dad."



Scott Valentine and his coaching staff begins the process of rebuilding the Trojans' football fortunes. The coaches include

(left to right) Scott Ewing, Larry Frisce, Brian Oney, Valentine, John Butcher and Rick Westin.

"I studied films with my dad throughout high school and that studying was a big reason I became an All-American at Ashland."

Valentine earned NCAA Division II All-American honors at defensive end his senior year, plus the Tony Hinkle Award for the top student-athlete in the Heartland College in 1985.

He was also a all-conference and all-academic player for three seasons.

After graduating from Ashland, Valentine spent a year as a graduate assistant at Ithaca College in New York and another year as an assis-

tant at Hobart College, also in New York.

In 1987, Valentine was an assistant to Steve Gilbert at Ashland Crestview.

"I was up in New York, but I wanted to get closer to home," said Valentine. "Family comes before football to me."

"The other reason for returning is I played basketball in high school and missed the interaction between sports. Plus, recruiting is like being a salesman," Valentine added.

The new coach has been able to install his football

philosophy in the short time he has been with the team.

"I've learned a lot of football from my dad and I'm excited to get my ideas expressed," said Valentine.

Valentine's offense is the wing-T.

Defensively, the Trojans will sport the 52 formation and attempt to control the gaps.

Coming in late has not been a problem because the South Central staff works so well, according to Valentine.

"I'll tell you what, I've got good people working for me," said Valentine. "They are doing more than I ask."

His staff begins with returning assistant John Butcher, the defensive coordinator who ran the off-season conditioning program with King.

Butcher also will work with the linebackers, guards and centers for Valentine.

The other veteran coach is Rick Westin, who is handling the defensive backs, halfbacks and wingbacks, plus will help Butcher call the defensive signals.

Other coaches include Larry Frisce (tackles, nose guards, tight ends and tackles), junior high coach Brian Oney and volunteer coach Scott Ewing.

Tracey returns to Plymouth to tutor defense

PLYMOUTH — The defensive outlook at Plymouth became even brighter when Mike Tracey returned as the Big Red's defensive coordinator.

"We're real happy with our defense," said head coach Richard Roll, who begins his seventh season at the helm at Plymouth.

"We've got Mike Tracey back and he has installed a "Bear" look, a 5-2 look and a 4-4 look," explained Roll.

It will be Tracey's job to improve a defense that was inconsistent in 1987.

The Big Red compiled a 5-5 mark last year and went 4-4 in the Firelands Conference. The defense had its moments as it blanked Norwalk St. Paul in the second game of the season, but it also gave up a lot of points, including 30 or more points four times.

The front line of the Big Red defense will be easy for

Tracey as nine lettermen return to fill the seven spots.

Senior letterman Tim Snipes (174) moves from a starting slot at defensive end inside to tackle along side senior letterman Chuck Deskins (179), who was a second team all-Firelands Conference player at nose guard last year.

"Tim has always been a defensive end, but we moved him because of his quickness," said Roll.

The third member of the down linemen is junior letterman Barry Handshoe (220), who will be getting his first look at defensive tackle. Senior letter winner John Myers (285) is also slated to see action on the line.

The two starter tackles from last year's squad, senior Mike Howell (192) and junior Roger Keesy (208) are being moved to the outside as ends in Tracey's defense, with

junior letterman Cory Myers (200) working as the No. 1 backup.

"They are both pretty quick and pretty strong," said Roll. "We've always had trouble at



Richard Roll
...7th season

end and Howell and Keesy are real tough kids."

Senior letterman John Ganzhorn (172), a team captain, and junior Frank Burks (144) are battling as backups at end.

Plymouth will send senior lettermen Jeff Tackett (209), also a captain, and James Fletcher (170) out as the starting linebackers.

"They are both quality players," said Roll. "Jeff will really hit you and James has been a starter since he was a freshman."

Cory Myers will be the main backup at inside linebacker. "Cory is going to have to do both (play end and linebacker)," said Roll. "We may end up moving him around because he's too good to keep off the field."

Tracey's job in the secondary isn't quite as simple according to Roll.

"The way it looks, we'll be

starting two sophomores at cornerback," said Roll. "We don't have many players but they are good."

Letterman Bryan Combs (132) has nailed down one of the starting jobs in the secondary, with David Sparks (147) getting the nod on the other side and senior letterman Jeff Bloomfield (163) ready in the wings.

Senior letterman and team captain Chuck Kosse (153) will patrol the secondary as the safety with senior lettermen Mike Bailey (186) and junior letter winner Wendell Slone (160) battling for the starting job at Viking back, or strong safety.

Besides Tracey, Roll can count on assistance from first-year coach Brad Turson, who was a former Plymouth player, plus volunteer coaches Troy Keene and Carlyle Smith.