

Ringler named new ringleader for Saints

ERA Banner Sports
December 04, 2008 09:02 PM
John Cudmore

The Newmarket Saints can't be accused of sitting on their laurels.

The Ontario Lacrosse Association Junior B franchise enjoyed a turnaround season in 2008 after relocating from Scarborough.

But that wasn't enough to prevent Saints ownership from replacing head coach Todd Wilfong and general manager Stew Beatty for the 2009 season.

Assistant coach Luke Ringler, who directed the Saints' defensive strategies last season, will handle both roles when the Saints hit the floor next season.

Wilfong initially agreed to remain as a coach under Ringler and to scout, but reconsidered and resigned Sunday night.

"The role I was going to take wasn't enough for me to contribute," said Wilfong, who guided the Saints to a 14-6 regular season record in his first season behind a Junior B bench, after the franchise went 7-13 in 2007 while based in Scarborough.

"My thought process was that they would bring in someone to run the offence and that would be great.

"I'm sure Luke will step in and take them far. I hope for the best for the team. It's just a little odd the way things came about.

"I have no hard feelings with Luke. It wasn't his main objective to steal our jobs. The owners just felt he was the man for the job."

Newmarket lost in the opening round of the playoffs to the Halton Hills Bulldogs. The process to promote Ringler, however, began shortly after the playoff ouster.

"Todd did a great job for us last year, but there is a feeling the team did well and now it's time to take it to the next level," said Jack Hurst, one of the Saints' owners. "I feel you can always improve. If not, you are going backwards.

"Luke has the utmost respect of everybody. He ran the defence like clockwork and put his stamp on the team. It's the natural progression."

Ringler, 29, has a clear vision of where he wants the Saints to be next season.

"We'll look to build on the regular season, although that will be tough to top," the Barrie resident said. "But we'd like to improve on our playoff."

Ringler will also take on the duties of general manager Beatty, who tendered his resignation on the weekend. Grady Robson will serve as the Saints' assistant coach and run the offence.

"I really enjoyed working with the Saints," Wilfong said. "It's a good group of guys and I think they have a good shot at winning Ontario and playing for the Founder's Cup.