



Record-Eagle/Douglas Tesner

Glen Lake coach Bill Hollenbeck makes a point to a player during a preseason scrimmage.



Record-Eagle/Dennis Chase

Mancelona head coach John Neumann, right, talks with assistant Scott Delling, whose father, Jerry, was the long-time coach for the Ironmen.

# Out of retirement

*During hard times, schools turn to former coaches to get programs back on track*

BY DENNIS CHASE  
AND MARK URBAN

Record-Eagle staff writers

So much for retirement.

So much for fall hunting and fishing.

Hall of Fame football coaches John Neumann and Bill Hollenbeck are back on the field, once again coaching the programs they helped make a success.

Neumann is in Year Two in his second stint at Mancelona.

Hollenbeck, meanwhile, returned as Glen Lake coach this year after three seasons away. The Lakers won a state title in 1994 and were runners-up in 1996 during his first tenure at the school from 1983-2001.

"I didn't expect an opening to come up, but when it did I decided to re-evaluate my life," Hollenbeck said. "I knew my wife (Cindy) was still going to be here teaching at the school.

"The bottom line is I wanted to do it one more time."

When it came time to consider returning to Glen Lake, Hollenbeck said the good memories were far greater than the bad ones.

"I remember all the fun I had in the past and wanted to do it again," Hollenbeck said. "I don't know how long it's going to last, but I'm happy, I'm here and I'm having a ball."

During Hollenbeck's last season with the Lakers, Glen Lake posted a 10-1 record. In the three seasons he was away, the Lakers were 12-15.

But getting the Lakers back to prominence doesn't concern Hollenbeck, who was elected to the Football Coaches Hall of Fame in 2000 and the High School Coaches Hall of Fame in 2003.

"It's more fun building a program than maintaining it ... way more fun," he said. "The expectations aren't there. Whenever you start winning, as time goes by, a lot of the hard work and work ethic, those things are

taken for granted. And more demands are put on the kids."

When he wasn't coaching Glen Lake football, Hollenbeck wasn't watching it either. His son had graduated and the coach made the decision to stay away.

He did come back for one game, because he was asked to "for a reason." That was the night the Victory Bell at the field was dedicated to Hollenbeck.

After deciding to return to the Glen Lake gridiron, Hollenbeck said he had some doubts.

"In April and May, the middle of weightlifting, the doldrums got to be a little trying," Hollenbeck said. "Now that we're in the season, I'm doing the things I love which is to coach, be with the kids and teach.

"Now I'm excited. The kids are receptive and that makes the whole thing.

"Plus, the parents have been extremely supportive. It's been nothing but a fun, fun time."

Hollenbeck was also able to get some of his former assistants to join him. Keven Pershinske and Kris Herman are back in the fold. Good friend Gary Galla stepped in to coach the junior varsity.

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— John Neumann,  
Mancelona coach

Plus, Hollenbeck has three former players — Mike DePuy, Pete Walters and Brian Mauer — on his staff.

"They know exactly what my system is all about," he said. "We're all on page one from the beginning."

A new beginning for the Lakers, and for Hollenbeck.

Neumann, like Hollenbeck,

had no plans to jump back into the fray when he stepped down as coach after the 1995 season.

"When I retired this was the last thing I expected to happen to me — that I would be back coaching football," he said.

"I'm too old for this," he added, just before running a lap around the field with his players. "I'm kind of sore myself."

Neumann actually returned to the sidelines last fall, taking over a once-proud program that had not won a game in over two years.

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