

# HEAD COACH

## Things will get more real when team can meet in person

Garvin doing what he can to prepare to be

By Chad Courier  
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It's only been 10 years since Pat Garvin was a student at Bethany Lutheran College, competing on the men's basketball team.

It's been a different feeling, returning to his alma mater, but there's also been a sense of comfort in his first shot at being a head coach.

"It's been hectic," Garvin said. "It's been nice to get back on campus, see some familiar faces and meet a lot of new people, too. Now, I'm trying to add to the roster."

It's only been a month since Garvin, 29, was named the men's basketball coach at Bethany Lutheran, where he played and was an assistant coach from 2009 to 2014. He spent the last three seasons as an assistant at Minnesota State, focused on recruiting, which is what he's been doing, despite some restrictions.

"I had a Zoom call with the players, and I've been trying to stay in touch with texts and emails, seeing how everyone did on their finals," Garvin said. "We're finally open for campus visits, so I'm trying to line up a couple of those."

The Vikings were 21-7 last season, making their second NCAA appearance in the last three years. There was only one senior on the roster, and as far as Garvin knows, all of the players who can return have chosen to do so.

But he'd still like to add to the roster, perhaps with an additional three or four players.

"Our biggest priority is to find some size and overall depth," Garvin said. "We have a lot of talent back, but I'd like to find some young guys who we can develop."

Garvin has hired an assistant, adding Sleepy Eye native Brandon Polesky, who has been on the Southwest Minnesota State staff for the last two seasons. Trenton Krueger, who graduated from last season's team at Bethany, will serve as the volunteer assistant.

Jared Milinkovich, who will be a senior next season, was on the selection committee to hire the new coach, so he knew a little bit about

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Pat Garvin has been focused on recruiting since he was named the men's basketball coach at Bethany Lutheran last month.

Chad Courier



Pat Garvin (right) is the new men's basketball coach at Bethany Lutheran. He spent the last three seasons as an assistant at Minnesota State.

Courtesy of MSU Athletics

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GARVIN: New Bethany coach excited to get players back on campus

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Garvin. He'd also met him at a couple of Minnesota State games.

But in a normal offseason, Milinkovich would have talked several times with the new coach, while getting some shots in the gym and conditioning work.

"It's not the same as when you're in high school, and you get to know the coach while you're being recruited," Milinkovich said. "I've talked with him on the phone, but it's not the same as in-person.

"He seems like a good guy. He has a lot of the same qualities that (former Bethany coach Matt Fletcher) had when he got started here. I think we made the right choice."

June was supposed to be a busy month at Bethany, with youth camps and summer leagues for high-school programs, but much of that has been canceled or postponed.

The camps have been rescheduled for July, but that's also up in the air. Soon, students will be returning to campus, with the first day of classes now scheduled for Aug. 24, and he will feel more like the head coach when he finally meets with the team in-person and begins workouts.

"It really hasn't set in yet," he said. "Once the players get back to campus, it will feel more real."

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