

Don Knock – Head Coach 1987-1999



Don Knock is a native of Parkersburg, IA. He graduated from Parkersburg High School in 1972. He played four sports in high school, earning 14 varsity letters. He played catcher in baseball, threw the shotput and discus, and ran sprints in track, played forward on the basketball team, and was a running back and defensive end in football. He earned All-Conference honors two years in football, one year in baseball and one year in basketball.

After graduating from high school, Knock attended Central College. During his first year at Central, Knock played football, basketball, and baseball, but chose to play only football after his first year. He earned All-Conference honors as an offensive lineman. Following his graduation from Central in 1976, Knock signed a free-agent contract to play linebacker with the Oakland Raiders and spent 10 weeks in their camp, playing in three exhibition games, before being cut.

After his playing career ended, Knock began his education career as a Physical Education teacher at Rockwell-Swaledale High School. Knock served as Head Football Coach and Head Track Coach at Rockwell-Swaledale from 1977-1980.

Knock left Rockwell-Swaledale in 1980 to return to school. Knock attended the University of South Dakota in 1980-1981, earning an M.A. degree in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation with a minor in School Administration. While attending South Dakota, Knock also served as coach of the running backs for the football team.

In 1981, Knock returned to coaching high school football in Iowa. From 1981-1987, he served as Head Football Coach and Head Track Coach at Grundy Center. His 1984 team won the Class 2A state championship. That team went undefeated and was ranked #1 in the state all season. When Knock left Grundy Center in 1987, he had 22 kids playing college football. Most notable players were Jeff Dole (Defensive MVP at Iowa State), Mike Stumberg attended Central College and later signed with the Seattle Seahawks, and Tim Baker (also at Iowa State).

Knock was named Kennedy's fifth Head Football Coach in 1987, a position he served until 1999. He also served as an Assistant Track Coach and taught Social Studies while at Kennedy. Knock led Kennedy to its first appearance in the playoffs in school history in 1990. His teams qualified for the playoffs during six of his final ten years at Kennedy. Knock coached several notable stars at Kennedy that played in college including Tony Booth (Iowa State), Eric Martin (Iowa State), Mike Morrison (Naval Academy/UNI), Joe Gurenko (Army/St. Cloud State), Cory Hannen (Iowa State), Kyle Knock (Iowa State), Brett Kellogg (Iowa State), DJ Doyle (Iowa), Kyle Bassett (Iowa State), and Chad Wiese (Iowa), among many others.

Knock was inducted into the Iowa Football Coaches Hall of Fame in 1996. At age 42 he was one of the youngest coaches to be inducted.

Following the 1999 season, Knock left Kennedy and served as an Assistant Offensive Line Coach at Iowa State for the 2000-2001 season. Knock's son Kyle was playing at Iowa State at the time, reuniting the father-son duo on the football field once again.

After just one season at Iowa State, Knock left for the University of Nebraska-Omaha, where he served as Offensive Coordinator and Offensive Line Coach for 2001-2002. The team qualified for the Division II playoffs and finished 8-4.

Knock returned to Iowa State in 2002, serving as Director of Football Operations/Recruiting Coordinator from 2002-2007 under Iowa State Coach Dan McCarney.

Knock returned to coaching high school football in 2007, serving as Head Football Coach of Kikapoo High School in Springfield, MO, where he also taught Physical Education.

Knock returned to Iowa following one season in Missouri, this time for an administration job. He served as Athletic Director at Gilbert High School in Gilbert, IA from 2008-2014.

Knock returned to sidelines in 2014, serving as Head Football Coach and Assistant Track Coach at Marshalltown High School. He retired from teaching and coaching in the spring of 2017.

Knock currently works for VGM Group in the Homelink Division in Waterloo, IA and resides in Marshalltown. He and his wife Cindy have been married for 40 years. The couple has four sons. Kyle married Sarah Desotel and they have 3 children, Mckenna (10), Aubrey (6), and Callen (2). Scot married Ashley Greggerson and they have 2 children, Avery (4) and Jaxsen (2). Beau married Diane Atkinson and they have one child, Ruby, an infant. Jordan is a redshirt Senior and plays Quarterback at Grandview University in Des Moines.

Upon reflection of his long coaching career, Knock said, "I have had the pleasure of coaching many great kids, have had the support of many great parents, have worked for many great administrators, have coached with many great men, and have been so blessed. Along the way some of the great young men have become pretty good players and went on to play at the next level. However, many more of the young men have become outstanding fathers and husbands and have continued to be great sons to their parents. They have created an unbelievable legacy at Kennedy High School, but more importantly have carried on their family name in the most respectable way possible. I hope I may have had a small part in the growth of these young men. I also was so blessed when I came to Kennedy to have some great mentors. Al Stiers, Harold Wilkenson, Greg Reed, Jim Schneekloth, and many more. I also had Athletic Directors that supported our football mission. Dennis Rubenow, Randy Krejci, and Mark Stewart. In our 13 years at Kennedy we were fortunate to mentor many young coaches who developed into outstanding coaches and teachers. Tim Lewis and Aaron Stecker were assistant coaches back in the 1990's. There were just so many people who contributed to the building of a football tradition. So many stories and so many great games. Today I am proud of the legacy that continues to develop with each class and each generation. I am very proud of my son Kyle who coaches the young men of Kennedy today."