

A famous poem helped him decide

Newly-appointed Michigan State University assistant basketball coach Bill Norton credits the late poet Robert Frost with helping him decide to leave his job as head coach and athletic director at Birmingham Brother Rice.

"In my biology class, I used to have the students memorize this poem called 'Two Roads Diverged in a Yellow Wood' by Robert Frost," Norton said.

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood. Sorry I could not travel both and be one traveler. Long I stood and looked down one as far as I could to where it bent in the undergrowth, then took the other as just as fair and having perhaps the better claim because it was grassy and want-

ed wear. Though as for that the passing there had worn them really about the same and both that morning equally lay and leaves not step had trodden black. Oh I kept the first for another day I doubted if I should ever come back. I shall be telling this with a sigh some where ages and ages hence. Two roads diverged in a wood and I, I took the one less traveled by and that has made all the difference.

Norton leaves Rice for MSU

Coach 'will cherish memories'

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"I don't think coaching college-age versus high school-aged players will be much different," he added. "I've got to believe that when someone turns 18 or 19 they don't automatically acquire the

maturity where they no longer need development.

"They continue to need direction, guidance and discipline. I think that the teaching aspect of my coaching at Rice

would have prepared me for the teaching I'll do here."

THE COACH ADDED that some people prefer to believe he is accustomed to the rigors of recruiting. Norton said, however, that a program such as the one offered by MSU and Jud Heathcote — one of the most well-respected coaches in the nation — should ease his job because recruits will have positive feelings from the beginning.

"My job at Rice has not involved recruiting as such," he said, "but it's been a job where I've been busy seven days a week. To work nights or weekends will be nothing new."

"Anybody that would achieve success in any line of work where promotion and enthusiasm are involved can't work from nine to five."

The biggest difference Norton expects to encounter as a college coach concerns talent and success.

"I'd say that in the Big Ten, everyone has eight or 10 great players," said Norton, "and every head coach has had winning experiences at probably the 60- or 70-percent level before taking their present job."

"Yet at the same time, half of the coaches and teams will have losing records in '81-'82. That makes things a little more difficult than when the talent and coaching ability are not so evenly dispersed," he added.

"You have to have great players and

you have to teach them and work with them. They have to respond and grow and develop."

THE PROMISING powerhouse Norton leaves behind at Rice will be growing, responding and developing without him — and delivering the blow wasn't easy for Norton.

"I had a close relationship with the players," he said, "and we were working hard this summer. I was looking forward to next year as one of the most exciting years ever, with a much freer running team, an extended defense, and higher scoring."

"Plus, with 10 seniors on the squad, it's the kind of team where the maturity would be there. We would have had a lot of fun together," Norton said.

"Since that's not going to be the case, we're not going to be able to share that fun the way we would have, and that's a little sad."

"I told the players individually, face-to-face if possible, and then I met with them down at St. Cecilia after a game. A few tears were shed."

Norton emphasized that he's not about to cut ties with Rice.

On Sept. 12 I have a 25-year high school reunion at the Detroit Golf Club," he said, "and a Brother Rice-Cardinal Mooney football game at the Silverdome."

"I'm going to be at the Silverdome. Brother Rice has become a part of our lives and it always will be."

Bowler ready for tournament

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All the women are nice. There isn't that cut-throat feeling during play. Some players are quiet and to themselves when they bowl, while others may talk or kid around a bit.

Last year in the tournament, I fell into a slight slump. When I finally regained my game and threw a strike, Patty Costello, a quiet bowler, said "Nice ball, Red." It made my day to know pro bowlers are people too.

This year there will be a new face in the tournament — Carol McLaughlin from Lake Orion.

McLaughlin, a guest pro, is a natural bowler. Never having the formal training or lessons in the game until recently, she managed to average in the high 180's and 190's.

Other local talent scheduled to bowl

include Shirley Carlie from Lake Orion, Bev Christiansen from Rochester and Jan Okopny from Oxford.

In preparation for the tournament, the bowling alley underwent a total overhaul. Everything was cleaned from top to bottom. The lanes were cleaned and dressed, so that the players can lay down that special shot that makes this such a high-scoring tournament.

The maskings were repainted, and banners hung.

Everything is ready for the pros. By 8 p.m. Thursday the tournament will be history. There will be a winner and some losers.

I don't know if "loser" is a good name for those of us that don't make it to the finals. There is always the consolation of knowing we bowled our best.



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