

Mach from page D1

to know Mach was serious about winning and 22 years later no one's surprised he owned a 199-42 career record entering Saturday's Class AA state playoff semifinal against Sterling Heights Stevenson.

A win against Stevenson would put Mach at 200 faster than any coach in state history. He has won five state championships, including four Class AA crowns in the 1990s.

Mach has a 21-2 playoff record this decade, with nearly half of the wins decided by less than a touchdown, two in overtime.

There are 24 coaches with 200 or more career wins. Dick Koski of Negaunee and John Harrington of Farmington Hills Harrison were the quickest to get there, winning their 200th games in their 24th year.

Mach has had 46 all-state players, starting with Mairona, who went on to star at Central Michigan.

The two coaches with at least 300 wins are still active: Saginaw Nouvel's Smokey Boyd has 302 career wins and Marysville's Walt Braun reached 300 this year.

Rick Coratti has been Mach's defensive coordinator every year.

"Like Batman and Robin, it's hard to imagine one without the other," said Wiska, a lineman who went on to star at Michigan State and play three years in the National Football League.

"Everything he teaches, you can take to the classroom, student council, anything you want to be. He is the high school version of what Vince Lombardi was to the Green Bay Packers. I can honestly say of all the coaches I've had, he's the best, even the pros."

CC was Mach's first head coaching job. He came there from Southgate Aquinas, where he was the defensive coordinator for a few years.

"I never thought I'd get the job," Mach said. "I thought it would be a great interview."

Four of Mach's former assistants at CC, Jim Gibbons (Redford Union), Jim DeJaeger (Rochester Adams), Chuck Baughman (Dearborn) and Terry Powers (Royal Oak Kimball) became head coaches at other schools.

Joining Coratti on Mach's current varsity staff are George Kuece and Roy Dudas. Kuece has been with Mach for 15 years and Dudas, a former Wayne State full-time assistant and an offensive line whiz, has been with him since 1990.

Junior varsity coach Mark Gagnon has been on staff since 1992. Recent CC graduates Chris Johnston, Joe Herman, Todd Lackey, Jack Davidson and Anron Babiez returned as assistants with either the JV or freshman teams.

Two of the constants of Mach coached teams have been a strong running game and tough defense.

There was a time Mach was content to run every play but with the advent of more creative defenses, he has obliged those wanting a more wide-open offense.

Wide open to Mach is 10 passes.

Whoever coined the phrase "three yards and a cloud of dust" must have been thinking of Mach. Maybe that's why he was so content with a practice field outside of school so ripped up

year after year. "I knew the run more than the pass and I went with what I felt comfortable with," said Mach, 51, who teaches physical education at CC. "Then I found out it's beneficial to winning, keeping the ball away from the other team, and letting your defense and kicking game help you win."

Mach and his wife, Lynn, have been married 21 years. The couple had twin sons, Mike and Joe, now eighth graders at Hilbert Junior High, when they were married in the chapel at the former site of CC, on Outer Drive near Seven Mile Road, in July, 1977.

Lynn, who says she wasn't a football fan before meeting Mach, had an idea he was true to his school when they walked out man and wife. "Instead of seeing our initials in flowers on the car, it was 'CC' in flowers," Lynn remembers. "That gave me a clue it was a big part of our life."

The two honeymooned in Traverse City. Yeah, probably so he could sneak a peek at what kind of team the town had that year. Traverse City was a state power at the time, eventually winning three state championships, including the 1938 state final against CC.

Instead of a movie, sometimes Lynn would go to a game Mach was scouting when they were dating.

"It was mainly so I could see him," she said, laughing.

Lynn drives a newer model van, but Mach is content with keeping their 1977 truck and 1984 Cadillac running.

That's how simple he is. The truck is currently sitting idle in front of the house with brake problems.

"I only go in it when we take the dog to the vet," Lynn said. "That's his good luck truck."

"You can see the ground

through the floor boards," laughs Gagnon.

Mach grew up in Berkley and wanted to join the priesthood, attending Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit for high school. Sacred Heart didn't have varsity sports programs.

"The hardest thing I didn't do is not play football in high school," Mach remembers.

After nearly five years at Sacred Heart, he decided to become a teacher and coach, leaving for Wayne State University, where he earned a starting position on the football team as a defensive back.

That he made the Tartars despite not playing high school football amused his coaches. They nicknamed him Crack for all the tough hits he delivered on opponents.

"They said if I want to come out I could give it a try but they sure didn't think I'd be a ballplayer after not playing four years," Mach said. "I had to watch the guys put on their pads the first time because I forgot where everything went."

Winning 300 games is certainly a possibility for Mach if he stays with it but he's not looking beyond Saturday's game.

He looks forward to coaching his sons at CC but doubts if he'll stay as long as the Shamrocks' wrestling coach Mike Rodriguez, who is now coaching his grandson - Cashball and wrestling standout Bruce Nysmith.

Rodriguez is the only coach at CC with more state championships than Mach: seven.

"I'm not predicting how long I'm going to do this," he said. "I wasn't even shooting for 200. I just like coaching. I like the high school kid because it's a great age to help shape their priorities and morals."

Whalers whip Spitfires, 7-2

The Windsor Spitfires scored the first goal Thursday, but the rest of the game belonged to the Plymouth Whalers, who ran their Ontario Hockey League record to 18-2-2 with a 7-2 trouncing of the Spitfires in Windsor.

Windsor slipped to 7-14-2.

Tomek Valtonen netted two goals and added two assists for the Whalers. Harold Druken, the OHL's scoring leader, added a goal and two assists, with David Legwand getting a goal and an assist, and Damian Surma, Shaun Fisher and James Ramsay all adding goals. Adam Colangiomo added three assists, with Nikos Tsellos and Eric Goudy collecting two assists apiece.

Robert Holsinger earned the win in goal, running his record to 10-1-1. He gave up two goals and made 17 saves in 31 minutes. Rob Zepp played the final 29 minutes without giving up a goal; he had six saves.

Windsor's Patrick Finnegan scored on the power play with 4:08 gone in the opening period. The Whalers answered with first-period goals by Valtonen (power play) and Surma.

Windsor tied it at 2-2 with another power-play goal, this one by Jason Palera 6:36 into the second period. Plymouth regained the lead for good a minute later, Legwand scoring with assists from Druken and Goudy.

Mike Leighton was in goal for Windsor.

Whalers lead league

The Whalers continue to dominate the OHL, both statistically and record-wise.

Harold Druken tops all scorers

HOCKEY

in points with 46 and in goals with 28. Druken is also No. 1 in short-handed goals with four, and is second in power-play goals with nine and game-winning goals with four. Next best goal-producer is Sarnia's Ivan Novoseltsev with 19 (through Thursday).

Second in the OHL in scoring is Plymouth's Adam Colangiomo with 41 points. He has 12 goals, including a league-best five game-winners, and his 29 assists places him third.

The Whalers' offense isn't limited to its forwards, either.

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Area from D2

Westland: Talk about a rookie season, Kuehne accomplished nearly everything a runner can do this season and has three more years to topple even more records.

Kuehne set Westland freshman records in five meets, as well as conference, regional and state meet marks. She wound up taking first at the Metro Conference championship and was an Academic All-Conference performer with a 4.0 grade point average (in the first quarter).

She took fourth at the regional with her career-best time (20:31) and finished 53rd at the Class C state meet in 20:19.

She also won the Dearborn Heights Crestwood Invitational, the Gabriel Richard Invitational and took second and third at the two Metro Conference Janchoress.

"Tess is a very talented runner who had never run competitively before this season," Westland coach Dave Brown said. "Once she learned how to race, she was nearly unbeatable. She did not lose a race in the month of October until the regional."



Tess Kuehne
Lutheran Wid.