

Up Close with Coach Krause

FHS football boss offers inside look in interview with new journalism students

Compiled by FHS Journalism

The 2018-19 Fairfield High School school year is underway, and that means new opportunities in the classroom and new beginnings on the football field. Academics and athletics combined forces recently when football coach Jason Krause met with novice reporters in a new journalism course taught by English teachers Mark Braam and Alysia Totten. The class — offered so students can explore the career of journalism while honing writing and interview skills — provided an intimate opportunity to talk with Coach Krause on a wide variety of topics.

The following quotes were compiled by the two journalism bells in their first opportunity to hold a real interview and then publish the results. The free-wheeling, wide-

ranging conversation was held after the season-opener in Centerville and before the home opener against Springfield. This is a portion of what Coach Krause had to say:

On Coaching:

Why coach?: “Coaching football is my life. Coaching is in my blood. It’s my 25th year coaching, and I watched my dad coach for years growing up ... my son (Hunter Krause, a 2016 FHS grad) wants to coach. It’s a family tradition in our house.”



Students in Mark Braam’s 7th bell journalism course take notes and prepare for their next questions with Coach Krause.



Coach Jason Krause listens intently to a student’s question during a recent interview.

Why come to Fairfield?: “When I was coaching for Middletown, I thought Fairfield was a diamond in the rough. It had good-looking kids — physically, and a good size, and demographics. Fairfield was a place for me and my son to be together (coaching and playing football).”

About coaching his son: “It’s a different dynamic than coaching other football students. We made a promise that we would leave any issues on the practice field and never take it home.”

His coaching philosophy: “I want to help kids and make a difference, I know a lot of them want to go to college and play

About the class

* **Instructors:** English teachers
Mark Braam, Alysia Totten

* **Student Data:** 28 total, a mix of
sophomores, juniors and seniors

* **History:** The course was reborn
this school year after an absence of
about a decade

* **Purpose:** To spread the good
news and information people need
to know about the school, the
district, and the community

* **Contacts:** Have a story idea or
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football, and I want to help them get places they want to be. [I] want kids to understand the value of working hard. If you can handle small disciplines, you'll become a more disciplined person."

His coaching methodology: "I try to build a relationship with the players. Praise is very important ... it's paying attention to the little things. It doesn't matter if they lose. Of course we want them to win, but the key is how you treat the players after the game, and getting them ready for the next one."

On Leadership:

Leaders Everywhere: "I really push all of the players to do well in school and get their priorities in check, because it can be a hard balance (academics and athletics). Just because you can't be the captain does not mean you can't be a leader.

"We need leaders in this school. Every year I find a few kids that show great leadership and occasionally we'll sit together at lunch and talk about different leadership skills and how they can improve those skills."

On Team Interactions:

Dealing with player disagreements: "When there's a beef, I try and squash it, and remind them that they are teammates. I remind players who are

fighting that they don't have to be best friends off the field, but on the field they need to get along. Communication is big on this team. I make sure the players communicate through all of the drama and problems with their teammates."

Relationships: "The team is a family more than a team. The toughest thing is losing our seniors. Relationships extend and they last after they graduate."

On the Season Forecast:

Keys to success: "Our leaders have to produce for us. That includes (junior) JuTahn McClain and (senior) Erick All (both of whom have committed to play college ball for Michigan). (We have to) get the ball into the right guy's hands (whomever that might be each week). We win with good people. I believe that."

Not looking too far ahead: "We worry about every team each week... Good programs focus every week. [Our] No. 1 goal is to win every night we go out. (And when Fairfield loses) we've got to move forward and make the next play."

Importance of practice: "The tougher practices are, the harder they work, the easier the game is. (We put) them through the daily grind, put them through the expectation to work on a high level."

On Other Topics:

Traditions: “I wear the same socks on game day, undershirt, belt. I would not call them superstitions ... but traditions.”

Crowd a Distraction? “Support from the audience is very important to the players. I know that they love playing in front of the student section. It (the audience) isn't a distraction for the players; it makes them want to work harder.”

The strength of the program: “You can catch alumni of the Fairfield football team playing on TV every week (referring to recent FHS graduates Josiah Scott/Michigan State, Malik Vann/University of Cincinnati, and Jackson Carman/Clemson).”

Students from Fairfield's new journalism course during their interview FHS football coach Jason Krause. Photos by Mark Braam

