



Dutch Fork's David Llooyi with the ball against White Knoll.

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The March 19 Region 5-5A contest played in Imo. The Silver Foxes defeated the Timberwolves by a 4-0 score.



PHOTO | GRAY COLLEGIATE ACADEMY

The Gray Collegiate Academy boys' soccer team salute head coach Kevin Heise following his 500th career win on March 16.

Gray Collegiate's Kevin Heise picks up 500th career coaching victory

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Great coaching, receptive players.

For longtime boys' soccer coach Kevin Heise of Gray Collegiate, it's a proven winning formula in his illustrious career.

On March 16, the War Eagles defeated Columbia 5-2, to remain undefeated in Region 3-2A. More important, Heise became the 4th coach in SC High School League history to reach 500 career victories.

"We have been fortunate to have soccer players in our programs

over the years and that has certainly made coaching at the high school level much easier," he said. "However, many of those soccer players are a by-product of our involvement at the youth and club level from recreation ages 4U-12U, Junior Academy ages 8U-12U, and select ages 13U-20 and encouraging players to play the game."

"It would be very difficult to compete at the highest high school levels without club players. We have tried to foster an environment that encourages year-round play and multi-sport involvement."

Heise compiled the bulk of his wins during his 26 seasons at

Brookland-Cayce. During that time, he led the Bears to 454 victories, 3 Class 3A Lower State titles, 7 state semifinals and 15 region titles.

Since arriving at Gray Collegiate, Heise has posted a career record of 46-17-3 with 2 region titles and an Upper State title appearance.

He joined a list of all-time coaching greats led by River Bluff head coach Phil Savitz (634 wins), West Florence's Billy Andrews (599 wins) and the retired William Hosea (541 wins).

"Those guys are true pioneers of the prep game in South Caro-

lina," Heise said. "I am fortunate to know all 3 and consider them friends. They are class individuals and have given much of their careers to the high school game and I applaud them for that initiative and commitment. I am lucky to be able to do what I do and have the support of a tremendous administration and soccer community."

Heise was not the only Gray Collegiate coach to recently reach a milestone. On March 12, junior varsity boys' coach Todd Wilkinson posted the 400th victory of his career - one which has spanned tenures at Dreher, Cardinal Newman and Brookland-Cayce.

"My staff (Ashley Harin, Kyle Heise, and Todd Wilkinson) and I were commiserating last night after the game and reflected on what has gotten us here over the years and consistency with what we believe in is paramount," Heise said. "We love the high school game. We insist on discipline within our teams and encourage a total commitment to the program."

"Deep down, kids want structure and direction and we aim to provide that for them via soccer. Once we get a group of student-athletes to buy in to the process, the competition and esprit de corps drives us."