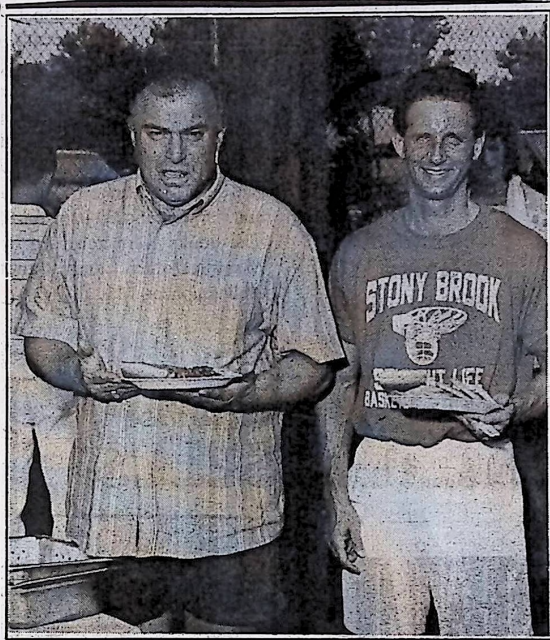




JUL 7, 1994

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Wilkes holds family picnic

Members of the Wilkes community gathered recently for the school's ninth annual family picnic, held at Ralston Field.

University faculty, staff, administration and their families enjoyed the warm weather as they joined together in activities such as tennis, softball and volleyball. Younger members of the Wilkes family were entertained with a magic show, face painting and carnival games.

Shown, from left: Gerald Cookus, chief of security, Pittston; Jerry Rickrode, head men's basketball coach, Wilkes-Barre.



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Among the many at the picnic, from the left are Gerald Cookus, chief of security, Pittston, and Jerry Rickrode, head men's basketball coach, Wilkes-Barre.

CV 6/24/94

Shaping up at Wilkes

New coach Rickrode
to stress conditioning

By PAUL SOKOLOSKI

Times Leader Sports Writer

WILKES-BARRE — For any Wilkes University basketball player planning to kick back a little bit this season, new coach Jerry Rickrode has a message.

"They'll be in the best physical condition of any team that ever played here," Rickrode said. "I don't want to make them body builders; but I want to make these guys the best-conditioned basketball players they can be."

Under Rickrode, the Colonels will need to be.

Rickrode, a former assistant with Ithaca and Utica with a mindset for fast-paced basketball, was named as the Wilkes men's basketball coach during a press conference at the university's Marks Center Thursday.

Rickrode, 29, was selected from a field of 70 applicants and was among four finalists for the Wilkes job, which was vacated when former coach Ron Rainey resigned after this past season.

"After we interviewed him, I said, 'He's going to be a head coach somewhere. I hope it's here,'" said Wilkes Admissions Director Emory Gufrovitch, who was part of the school's seven-member Men's Basketball Search Committee.

"Every question that was asked of him, he was ready," Guf-

Coach

(Continued from Page 1C)
rovitch said. "I believe that Jerry has done his homework. He has an excellent grasp of Division III and the characteristics of it."

Rickrode is from the Harrisburg area, and said he knows the Wilkes-Barre area well. He spent last season heavily recruiting Bishop Hoban guard Tony Modrowsky, who eventually decided to attend Bloomsburg in the fall.

"I've recruited the area very hard for the last several years," Rickrode said. "I'm convinced this is a very good area for basketball. And I know the MAC conference. I've always wanted to work in this conference."

He'll get that chance, and hopes to put out a team built on speed.

"I'm a very up-tempo coach," said Rickrode, who indicated he likes to utilize a constant pressure defense and an offense built around a lot of motion and a fast-break attack. "If we have that type of team, that's the way I like to coach."

"And you've got to be in pretty good shape to do that."



TIMES LEADER/RICHARD SABATURA

MEET THE COACH — New Wilkes Coach Jerry Rickrode answers questions at a press conference on Thursday

He'll begin his new job Monday, when he attempts to snare a few late recruits for Wilkes. His goal, simply, is to make the Colonels into perennial MAC title contenders.

"I'm not ready to make any high-powered predictions," Rickrode said. "We have a good nucleus returning. I think we can be

competitive this year. I'd like to think after three recruiting classes, that we're going to be in a situation where we're competing for a conference championship every year."

"I'm looking forward to turning the corner a little bit here and getting things going."



26/10/91 IS
SPORTS THERAPY PROGRAM — Wilkes University recently contracted with Nesbitt Memorial Hospital for the services of its Sports Therapy and Rehabilitation program (STAR). Via STAR, Nesbitt Memorial Hospital's professional staff provides rehabilitative, emergency and preventive services at the university's extracurricular activities. STAR includes comprehensive athletic training and physical therapy services which suit the needs of the individual athlete with special concern for rehabilitation through continued participation and open communication between the individual, trainer, physical therapist and physician. Shown in the front row, from left, are representatives of Wilkes University and

Nesbitt Memorial Hospital, Tom McGuire, sports information director, Wilkes University; Karen Haag, women's basketball coach, Wilkes University; Dr. Ralph B. Rozelle, vice chairman of the Board of Directors of Wyoming Valley Health Care System, Inc., chairman of Nesbitt Memorial Hospital's Board of Directors, and Wilkes University; Joe DeMelfi, head football coach, Wilkes University; Jerry Rickrode, men's basketball coach. Standing, same order, James Hockenbury, business manager, Physical Therapy, Nesbitt Memorial Hospital; Jay Kelly, associate vice president, Nesbitt Memorial Hospital; and Michael Aed, supervisor, athletic trainers, Nesbitt Memorial Hospital.

Sports

Ithaca College assistant tops 70 applicants

Rickrode nets Wilkes' job

By TOM HOUSENICK
Citizens' Voice Staff Writer

Jerry Rickrode, not a household name in this area, is plenty familiar with Wilkes-Barre.

Rickrode also is familiar with the situation the Wilkes University basketball program is currently in.

The (Ithaca) New Yorker is certainly familiar with the organizational skills it takes to run a basketball program.

And, he knows how to market his ideas and his image.

For those reasons, Wilkes University gave Rickrode the head men's basketball coaching job, it was announced Thursday at the Marts Center Conference Center.

The seven-member national search committee received 70 applications and conducted four interviews since Phil Wingert was named to the athletic director's post shortly after Easter last month.

According to Emory Guffrovich, Wilkes admissions director who was representing the search committee, Rickrode was the perfect man for the job.

"The way he (Rickrode) addressed the questions," Guffrovich stated, "you knew he had done his homework. He was prepared for the interview and knew exactly what he wanted to get across and what he wanted to do with the basketball program."

"He has a grasp of Division III basketball and he has obviously studied well under his previous head coaches. He clearly emerged from the four candidates."

Rickrode graduated from Skidmore College with a bachelor of arts degree in biology/physical education, and he was awarded a master's degree from Ithaca Col-



Wilkes president Dr. Christopher Breiseth listens as new coach Jerry Rickrode outlines goals

lege in physical education with a concentration in sports medicine.

The Harrisburg native was the head freshman coach at Skidmore College in Sarasota Springs, New York (August, 1985-86) before taking the same position at Ithaca College until 1987.

Rickrode became an assistant coach Utica College in New York in August 1987 before returning to Ithaca College as a full-time assistant in July 1988.

Rickrode is anxious to take on the project of his first head coaching position. "It's a good situation here for recruiting," he stated. "We're within a couple of

hours of New York, Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Reading. There are a lot of positives. I'm looking to turn the corner."

"I'm going to sit down with the returning players first and show them there is a commitment here. Then, I've got to hire a couple of assistant coaches and try to get some freshmen this summer for the coming year."

Going out in June to recruit isn't the easiest thing for a coach to do, but Rickrode is not new to the idea.

"At Utica five years ago, from May to August, we were making the transfer from Division I to

Division III," Jerry recalled. "We had zero kids at the time. We ended up with 14 kids, and not just ordinary players, either."

"We have a good nucleus here," Rickrode added about the current Colonel program. "I'd like to get some freshmen in here this year."

We've got a list of kids that I'm going to recruit."

Rickrode spent the better part of this past high school basketball season recruiting Bishop Hoban's Tony Modrovsky for Ithaca. "I'd seen 14 games and been in most of the area gyms watching the Hoban kid play. I spent the whole winter in Wilkes-Barre, so I'm

familiar with the area."

Dr. Christopher Breiseth, Wilkes University president, noted that he is concerned how Rickrode molds the student/athletes rather than forming the Colonels' won/loss record.

"I'm going to focus on how he (Rickrode) develops the characteristics of the game in the student/athletes," Breiseth said. "I've told Jerry in private earlier that I'm not concerned with wins and losses. I'm concerned with the development of team intensity and discipline and how the athletes use those skills they've learned."

Rickrode is also publicly cautious about setting any high standards right from the start. "I'm not ready for any high-powered predictions," he added. "I'd like to think that within three years we can compete for the (MAC) conference championship. I think we can be competitive from the start. The team will be conditioned and prepared for every possible situation. That I guarantee you."

The search committee at Wilkes University consisted of: Wingert, who was attending the MAC conferences Thursday and not at the press conference; Addy Malatesta, field hockey and softball coach at Wilkes; Guffrovich, Kermit Douglas, Colonel basketball team representative; Dr. Joel Berlatsky, professor; Karen Haag, Lady Colonels basketball coach; and, Tom McGuire, Wilkes SID.

The committee reached an agreement on Rickrode's appointment last Friday and presented their candidate to Breiseth, who took their recommendation.

Dave Martin, former Wilkes Misericordia head coach, was rumored to have been one of the other three candidates. The committee would not divulge the names of the other candidates.



