

St. Joseph (Mont.)'s Tony Karcich to retire as school's athletic director



St. Joseph athletic director Tony Karcich, who stepped down as head football coach in 2013, will be retiring from his current position at the end of the school year. (John O'Boyle | The Star-Ledger)

By JJ Conrad | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com
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After more than three decades with St. Joseph (Mont.), **Tony Karcich** has reached the end of the road in Montvale.

The legendary Bergen County figure who enjoyed a coaching career that culminated in 20 state championships at Bergen Catholic and St. Joseph will be retiring as the Green Knights' athletic director at the end of the school year.

He has been with St. Joseph since 1985 and retired as head football coach after the 2013 season, capping a 338-win career in 38 seasons. His stint as the school's athletic director began in 1993, a position he'd remain in for the next 25 years, overseeing a program that has reached national prominence.

"Because I have been blessed with a great assistant in Mrs. Sharon Kozuch, I have been able to continue in this role on a part-time basis these last couple of years," Karcich said in a press release Monday. "That arrangement has enabled me to spend more time with my family and grand-kids than I was able to do previously, and I am grateful to everyone at SJR for that opportunity. However, in light of the challenges that come with any elite high school athletic program, it is my feeling that the school needs a full-time Athletic Director going forward."

After coaching Bergen Catholic for nine years, leading the Crusaders to three state championships, Karcich eventually landed a job with St. Joseph in 1985 after a two-year hiatus from coaching. He proceeded to help turn the Green Knights into state and national powers, going 266-55-2 over 29 years, including 17 seasons ending with a state championship.

Karcich's 338 career wins rank first all-time in Bergen County history.

"This news comes as a little heavy-hearted," said current SJR head football coach Augie Hoffmann, who served as Karcich's successor in 2014 after both playing for and coaching under Karcich previously in his career. "He's been everything to St. Joe's for a long time and he meant a lot to a lot of people, me being one of them. Him retiring is definitely going to change the way things work around here.

"I couldn't even begin to quantify how important he's been to me in my life. Forget about football. He's been a mentor, a disciplinarian, a guy I can lean on. It wouldn't even be fair to try to put into words what he's done for me in my life."

SJR president Barry Donnelly echoed similar statements in the press release Monday.

"I have had the pleasure of working with Tony Karcich throughout his thirty-three year tenure at St. Joe's, and I can think of no one who has represented our school better or served our students with greater passion and integrity than he has," said SJR President Barry Donnelly. "He has been a truly legendary presence in our athletic program for all these years. He will be greatly missed."

Karcich is a member of the New Jersey Football Coaches Hall of Fame, and is a past recipient of the YMCA Person of the Year Award, the UNICO Citizen of the Year Award and, most recently, the Mickey Corcoran Lifetime Achievement Award from the Bergen County Coaches Association (2016) and the Dr. John Bateman Education Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award (2017).