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Bellaire
Exam

Coach Kanzig collects 200th win at Bellaire

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Ray Kanzig never saw this coming. Especially this way, when 19 years ago he began his varsity soccer coaching career with the Milby girls team.

But last Monday with a 4-2 victory over the Milby boys, Kanzig collected his 200th win as a varsity coach.

"It's quite thrilling," said Kanzig. "I never imagined I'd get to 200 wins in my coaching career. And, now, I'd like to shoot for 300, if I could."

Actually, he admits he'd like to have victory 201 Tuesday against Lamar in the district finale, and then notch a few more in the upcoming playoffs.

"Right now, my concern is just getting 201 against Lamar and then hopefully adding on to that total with a few more wins in the playoffs," said Kanzig.

He began his coaching career at Milby in 1991, directing the girls program for four years before accepting the coaching job at Bellaire on the last day of the school year in 1995.

He said he would never have left Milby, but he wanted an athletic period for his girls. Despite efforts from Milby officials, that just never happened.

So he accepted the Bellaire job (he had also applied for the Lamar girls job) and was named

the new girls coach.

But not long after taking the job, he was contacted and told that former Bellaire head football coach Stan Roper wanted to speak with him.

"I had no idea who Stan Roper was, because I was new to Bellaire and had taken the job on the last day of school," said Kanzig. "So I hadn't met anybody and didn't know the athletics coordinator was trying to contact me."

When they finally did hook up, Kanzig was offered the boys job. After hesitating, he decided to take it.

"I had never coached boys before, and I wasn't sure I should do it," said Kanzig. "In fact, the thought of coaching boys was a little intimidating. At Milby, I had worked pretty much on the fundamentals of the game. I didn't have girls who played soccer except when it was soccer season, so I spent a lot of my time working on fundamentals, and I wasn't sure that the boys would take to that type of coaching like the girls did."

"But they did, and it's been a wonderful time at Bellaire. I've had some very good teams, and we've had a lot of success over the years. So looking back, I never thought I'd coach at Bellaire. I never thought I'd coach boys. But here we are, and it's

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something I still look forward to doing every day."

He has racked up 182 wins during his time on the school on Maple Avenue.

"I have to give a lot of credit to my players and to my family,"

said Kanzig. "I've had the pleasure of working with a lot of fine young men who were good soccer players during that time. And I've had the support of my family.

My wife and everyone has always been behind me and supported me, and it's just been a lot of fun. It's a real thrill to have had things work out the way they have."