

Sideline to sideline Rutigliano has choice; former NFL coach is doing what he wants

By Hank Bond
For The Claridon Mercury

SPORTS EXTRA
MOREHEAD- It was 7:30, on a Friday evening, and it was time for a team dinner, and then a team meeting.

For Sam Rutigliano it was a little different at this dinner - and this team meeting - than it had been for many, many years. Rutigliano was the head coach and vice-president of the Cleveland Browns.

In his six and a half years as head man in Cleveland, Rutigliano was named AFC Coach of the Year in 1979 and 1980 and NFL Coach of the Year in 1980. But in the professional ranks it is a lot like any corporate world employment - "What have you done for me today?"

After bringing the Browns to the head of the pack in the AFC Central Division and dancing in the playoffs, Rutigliano's 1984 Browns team was off to a 1-7 start and management, especially Art Modell, ignored the complexities of the professional level, and the problems it could bring, and fired Rutigliano as head coach.

After leaving the field in the NFL with a 47-52 career mark, Rutigliano ended up well, with sportscoaching jobs for NBC and ESPN.

In addition he delivered speeches for Athletics in Action and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He also wrote an autobiography *Pressure*, while turning down several opportunities to get back into the professional level.

Professional ranks offered the same old thing
"I kept hearing the same thing from the NFL," Rutigliano said. "They were changing coaches like light bulbs. I didn't like some other things that were going on. I didn't need to get back into coaching. I was happy. I was busy. I didn't need that job."

Then, as Rev. Jerry Falwell, president of Liberty University, sought to take his Flames football program into the national limelight, Rutigliano came to mind. Coaching at Liberty University (enrollment 10,000) in Lynchburg, Virginia was something Rutigliano just wanted to do.

"I know this sounds funny to some people," he said, sitting in the waiting area of the restaurant of the Morehead Holiday Inn. "When this job was offered to me, for the first time in my life I took a job because I wanted to, not because I had to. Before, I needed the job, but I was working and happy, and this is a job I wanted to take."

"If this would have been 1965, the year after being fired in Cleveland I might have made up my mind not to get back into coaching." "There's no place like it Liberty," he said. "We're an Evangelical outreach."

"As Rutigliano's players moved throughout the lobby area of the Holiday Inn, there was no doubt they were happy with their coach and happy to be at Liberty."

"We like him a lot," said two players as they made their way to the banquet room for the evening's meal. "He's a class gentleman," another said.

Pressure there fans want wins; that's nothing new
Clearly, Liberty's following Continued on Page 5



SPORTS EXTRA PHOTO BY HANK BOND

Making the move from the professional ranks to the college coaching level Sam Rutigliano has found the job he wants. The transition has been successful, for not only have the Flames responded to 2-0 with a win Saturday night, but Rutigliano has found suits his personal beliefs.

Liberty takes 5.....

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Morehead's Anthony Jardine returned the kickoff 19 yards to give MSU a first down at the 21. Swartz passing moved the Eagles into Liberty territory. After a second and 10 pass fell incomplete the Eagles called for a timeout.

MSU head coach Bill Baldwin apparently designed a gadgetry exclusive, as Swartz lifted a spiral into the left corner where Anthony White hauled in the pass at the two. Spinning away from two would-be tacklers White fought his way into the end zone for MSU's second score of the game.

Feda's added the extra point and it appeared Morehead was in the game to the finish. However, Liberty had no plans to leave the Bluegrass State with a blemish on its record. Clarence Shelton had a 17 yard run and Scott Queen pulled down a nine yard pass from Paul Johnson, both good for touchdowns in the fourth quarter. Harrell added the extra points both times, and the Flames took the 34-14 decision.

Although Swartz was 22 of 47 for 220 yards and two touchdowns, it simply wasn't enough. The Flames were able to pick off two passes from Swartz to stop MSU scoring drives, but most damaging, Morehead was only able to manage 28 yards rushing on 20 carries, forcing the Eagles to rely on the passing game.

The Flames finished the game with 457 yards total offense to 384 for the Eagles.

Passion time also hurt the Eagles, as Liberty held the ball for 36:51 compared to 23:09 for Morehead.

Liberty returns home to face James Madison University, while the Eagles will try to get back on a winning track in a non-conference game with Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. The Eagles will open next week's play, October 7 against the Murray State Racers, before returning home, October 14 to battle Middle Tennessee State in the annual homecoming game.

Sideline to sideline

Continued from Page 4

personal savior, Rutigliano says without a doubt this job gives him something special. "I view this as my platform to do the things I believe in as a disciple."

As Rutigliano returned to the banquet room, those in the public portion of the restaurant continued with their evening meal.

Two weeks prior to facing Morehead in the Flames' second game of the season, Rutigliano's first road game as a college head coach, Liberty handled Edinboro State with relative ease, posting a 51-27 win.

That marked Rutigliano's first win as a college coach, and set the pattern for what he hopes to accomplish on the field as the head coach of Liberty University. "There's pressure to win here."

"I know we will have a winner here, and it will be done the right way. I feel stronger about Liberty and my decision to come here every day. This is a great experience, and I am pleased to be here."

Rutigliano, 56, has been out of the college game for 23 years, taking his first professional coaching job as an assistant with Denver in 1967.

Rutigliano said his family certainly supported his choice to move into coaching with an emphasis on Christian living, when he accepted the job, December 20, 1988.

"There was just a good reason to be here, along with being back into the college coaching field," he said. "I have always liked the football environment at the college level. And here, with the lack of the distractions like drugs, alcohol and smoking, it is conducive to having my family here."

"I can interact with the players at Liberty a differently than I could on the professional level. These young men have respect for themselves, for other people and for opponents on the field. The discussions, the language, the talk in the locker room aren't as inflammatory as they have been in the professional level. Rutigliano was quick to point out this coaching job offered him his chance.

With a strong personal belief in God and Jesus Christ as his

Many were unaware Rutigliano had been in the waiting line, unlike the days as the head man at Cleveland. In a matter of minutes a hush fell over the restaurant as a refrain of Amazing Grace filled the room in a very baritone key.

His team was practicing what it believed. A combination of personal beliefs, coming together as a unit on the football field and in team meetings.

For many on the professional level, this may not be the choice, but for Sam Rutigliano it was the only one he wanted to make.

KENTUCKY-ALABAMA STATS		
Autumn	2	1
Spring	1	1
Midway	1	1
Overall	4	4
Points	153	153
Yards	11,762	11,762
Turnovers	37	37
Fumbles	38	38
Interceptions	12	12
Passing	27-55	26-50

Cats offense sluggish, Tide rolls 15-3

By Hoyt Harwell
AP Sports Writer

FOR SWARTZ'S EXTRA
TUSCALOOSA, Ala. (AP) - Alabama's defense didn't want to be embarrassed again by Kentucky's 15-3 victory on Saturday.

Alabama's 12 offensive touchdowns in 15 minutes of play were the only ones to give the Cats a lead over the Wildcats (14). Kentucky's Kean Willis kicked one for 20 yards to make it 15-3.

The victory was costly, however. Jeff McNeal, a second string fullback, kicked a 40-yard drive by going over the top of the field.

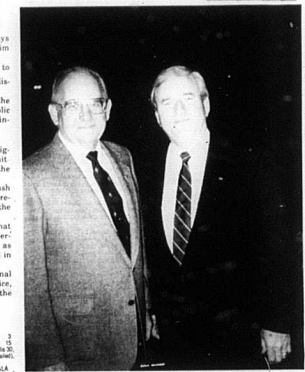
Clayton was the lone defensive player in the end zone since the end of the game in the second quarter. The victory was costly, however. Jeff McNeal, a second string fullback, kicked a 40-yard drive by going over the top of the field.

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SPORTS EXTRA PHOTO BY HANK BOND
Dr. C. Nelson Grote, left, and Rev. Jerry Falwell, right, pose for photographers during a photo session at the Morehead State Liberty University football game, Saturday night. Falwell is president of Liberty University, and is the guest of Dr. and Mrs. Grote during the game. Falwell is seeking to recruit his football team to Division I with the addition of Sam Rutigliano as head coach.

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This Week
Cats are Tale
Next Game
October 6 Auburn