

# HPCA taps Beck as boys soccer coach

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HIGH POINT – Austin Beck is ready to start building his boys soccer program at High Point Christian.

Beck, a former Wesleyan Christian standout, has taken his first high school head coaching job, HPCA athletic director Corey Gesell announced Tuesday.

“I’m really excited about the challenge of building a program,” Beck said Wednesday, “and trying to get the younger kids and middle school kids involved.

“It’s not just about the here and now; it’s also about the future. It’s a challenging process, but I’m very excited about it. I’m the type that enjoys a challenge.”

Gesell is equally excited about bringing Beck, who interviewed last week after seeing the school’s ad in the newspaper, into the High Point Christian community.

“I’m very excited. He’s going to do a great job,” he said. “He has a lot of good experience. He’s a great young man of Christian character and he has his priorities right.

“We checked with a lot of knowledgeable local soccer people, and they had nothing but the highest things to say about him.”

Beck graduated from WCA in 2005 and played at Houghton College and Montreat College before returning to the area, now working in insurance in Burlington. He will be coaching his third season with the Piedmont Triad FC.

He started all four years in college and three years at Wesleyan, where he was team MVP, PACIS Player of the Year, NCISAA All-State and All-Region. Beck also played one summer with the Mississippi Brilla FC in the USL Premier Development League.

He replaces Shawn Mehegan, who led the program six or seven years, Gesell said. Mehegan led the Cougars to three straight NCISAA 2A final four appearances from 2007 to 2009. But Gesell is confident Beck can continue to build the program.

“He’s very mature for his age,” Gesell said, noting there were seven or eight candidates considered for the job. “He’s had great experience playing and great training with very good coaches. So, he has a great idea of how to run a soccer program.”

Beck, who described his style as a mix of movement, possession and hard work, will be introduced to the HPCA community on Tuesday at 6 p.m. in the high school’s library.

The Cougars begin practice on Aug. 1 before playing their first game on Aug. 16.

“It’s coming together,” Beck said. “It’s tough right now, because I haven’t met the players yet. But it’s my first season, so it’ll be a building year to figure out my philosophy and figure out how to tailor the program.”

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