

## Press Clippings 06/06/2019

### SPORTS

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## Bartlett High School mourns sudden death of teacher, coach Brad Hunt

By: John Lemon and John Radtke



Bartlett High School physical education teacher, girls basketball coach and assistant softball coach Brad Hunt, pictured during a sectional victory over Geneva in February, died of an apparent heart attack Tuesday.

The Bartlett High School community is mourning the death of physical education teacher, head girls basketball coach and assistant softball coach Brad Hunt from an apparent heart attack Tuesday.

Hunt, 43, had returned to his South Elgin home after his basketball camp at school and was mowing his yard.

Hunt's wife Emily called Bartlett athletic director Jeff Bral Tuesday afternoon. Emily and Brad have a son, Brady, and daughter, Madison, in elementary school.

"He was involved in everything," Bral said of Hunt. "He was my colleague for four years when I was a PE teacher as well. I got to know Brad in many different facets. He meant a great deal to the basketball community. He has been involved in a very successful girls basketball program, probably our most successful program we have here."

Bral said the camp continued Wednesday with counselors on hand.

"Our district does a really good job when it comes to loss or any issues, we create a crisis team," Bral said. "Our administrators and counselors met with the girls and at that point the best way to cope sometimes is get back on the horse and go. They kept it really light but the kids wanted to play basketball. Kudos to the district for doing a great job there in a situation like that. We had alumni show up this morning."

Hunt was the Hawks' varsity coach the past two years and had been involved in the program long before that. He also was an assistant softball coach for 13 years under Jim Wolfsmith.

An emotional Wolfsmith said, "I have never met an educator and coach who was more passionate about kids than Brad. His sole purpose in life was to make kids better and Brad had that gift. This is just devastating news."

Hunt became the varsity basketball coach before the 2017-18 season when Dave Mello left for Fenton.

"Awful news," Mello said. "Was completely shocked when I received the call. Brad was a friend, a colleague and a very special person."

"One of Brad's greatest dreams was to be a head basketball coach and I'm glad he got to realize that," Wolfsmith said. "It's a shame that greatness was cut short."

Hunt was a longtime assistant girls basketball coach under Denise Sarna, the first and only head coach of the program until she retired following the 2014-15 season.

"Very shocking news," Sarna said. "It's just sad and I can't stop thinking about the family. He was so young. He was a passionate guy and really enjoyed what he did. He was so proud of the kids he coached and he cared so much about each of them."

A West Lafayette, Ind., native and Purdue graduate, Hunt spent 15 years at Bartlett and coached several sports in some capacity for all of those 15 years.

This past season, Hunt coached the Hawks to a 29-5 record, Upstate Eight and regional championships, and a victory over two-time defending state champion Geneva in the Class 4A Batavia sectional semifinals. He earned region coach of the year.

Before that he worked as an assistant for both Mello and Sarna for seven years -- including their 2012 team that finished third in state. He earned a reputation for passion, hard work and commitment to the Bartlett student-athletes.

"He made my two seasons as the head girls coach at Bartlett super easy," Mello said. "No one worked harder or was more dedicated than him. Even in this day and age of teams sharing HUDL film, Brad would always go and scout in person to make sure we were fully prepared. No one cared more about the students and athletes at Bartlett. A huge loss for the Bartlett community and the girls basketball community."

"We've all lost a good friend," Wolfsmith said.

Visitation will be held on Saturday at Laird Funeral Home, 310 S. State Street in Elgin, from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

At the request of Hunt's family, there will be a celebration of Brad's life at Bartlett High in the gym starting at 10 a.m. Monday.

The Bartlett High School Booster Club has created a fund with the proceeds going directly to the Hunt family. To donate, log onto [bhsboosters.org](https://bhsboosters.org).