

Hardin Leaves Freedom After One Season

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Blair Hardin was named head coach and assistant athletic director at North Myrtle Beach High in South Carolina last Monday night. He inherits a football

team that has finished 5-5 and 9-3 the last two years after consecutive 0-10 seasons.

Hardin's hiring was officially approved by the Horry County School Board on Monday night.

He was named one of three finalists for the North Myrtle Beach job last Friday (alongside Joey Price of Wallace-Rose Hill and Tommy Norwood of Jamestown-Ragsdale).

Hardin, 32, was defensive coordinator at Providence and Ardrey Kell for two seasons each and his first head coaching job was at Porter Ridge, where his teams went 50-18 in five seasons, including 40-5 the last three years with a pair of 4A state title appearances his last two years.

He is a second-generation coach. His father, Bruce, had a long career as an athletic director and has been head football coach at Providence Day since 2008. Also a college assistant during his career (The Citadel, Army), Bruce Hardin coached two Kannapolis-Brown teams to state football titles and coached West Charlotte in two 4A title games. Blair's brother, Justin, is

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head football coach at Providence.

Freedom was eliminated from the 3A state playoffs in the second round, falling 35-34 at home to Forestview after beating East Rowan in the first round. It was Freedom's fourth straight 10-win season, the first three coming under Mike Helms.

The Patroits are 43-9 over the past four seasons, with four of the school's eight 10-win seasons. The other 10-win seasons came in 1987 (11-2, Pete Stout) and 1998, 1999, and 2002 (10-3, 11-1, 10-3, respectively, Tim McMahon).