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## Derek Taylor

Monday May 11, 2009

### Hoover's Stoffel to retire from coaching

by [Derek Taylor](#)  
Daily Mail sports writer



Steve Stoffel Sr. has been a part of the Herbert Hoover football program for almost half of the school's life.

He said on Sunday that it is time for him to go.

"It was Wednesday a week ago, I forget the date right now, but I put in my resignation," said Stoffel, who took over as the Huskies' head coach in 2000 after a decade as an assistant.

"There's a lot of other things that I'd like to do with my time," Stoffel said. "I haven't had a football season off since I was in the seventh grade. I think it's time that I take one off."

Stoffel is also the athletic director at Hoover, and he said he intends to remain in that capacity for at least another year.

The Huskies reached the playoffs three times under Stoffel and reached the Class AA quarterfinals in 2002, his third season as head coach. That year - Hoover's first in Class AA - the team finished 7-5 and lost to Cardinal Conference rival Poca 15-12 in the second round of the playoffs.

Stoffel's best team took the field in 2005, when junior All-State running back D.J. Taylor and an offensive line headed by 6-foot-2, 225-pound Aaron Beighle plowed through the regular season to finish 9-1.

Hoover took the No. 3 seed into the Class AA playoffs that season, but was upset in the first round by No. 14 Grafton, 29-27, at University of Charleston Stadium.

Taylor rushed for a school-record 2,301 yards and 30 touchdowns in 2005, and eclipsed the Hoover school record for career yardage the next season. Taylor rushed for 1,675 yards and 16 touchdowns in 2006, becoming Hoover's all-time leading rusher.

Stoffel, who coached the South Cardinals in the 2008 North-South All-Star Football Classic and built a 43-51 record with the Huskies, said he hopes that his son - Hoover assistant coach Steve Stoffel Jr. - will be able to take over the program.

Today is the final day applications will be accepted for the position, according to the Kanawha County Schools Web site.

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"I hope that he has a shot at it," Stoffel Sr. said. "He's applied, and so has another guy on the staff, Tim Meyer.

"Tim's been with me on the staff for a long time."

Hoover Principal Roy Jones will make a recommendation to the Kanawha County Board of Education.

Whomever that candidate may be, Stoffel Sr. said they must be able to light an off-season fire under players in

the northeastern corner of the county.

"They've got to get kids to buy into the program," he said. "The big thing is to get them into the weight room. We've got some kids coming back so they'll have some experience, but the big thing we've had to deal with the last few years is injuries and a lot of that comes down to conditioning."

The injury bug began to bite in Taylor's senior year, when the Huskies finished 5-5 and missed the playoffs after being considered a top 10 team in the preseason.

Hoover slipped to 1-9 in 2007, when it was one of several area schools to be forced to play several home games on the road or at neutral sites due to what became commonly known as "Bleachergate" - a BOE snafu that delayed the construction of new bleachers at the football fields of Hoover, St. Albans, Nitro and Sissonville.

Stoffel Sr. said that 2008 was his most disappointing season, however. Injuries to key players both in the backfield and in the trenches led to a 2-8 campaign.

"The highlight of everything was dealing with the kids of the Elk River area," he said. "They're great kids, and I wish the best for them."

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THE CABELL County Board of Education approved a motion on Thursday to install FieldTurf at Huntington High.

According to a report in the Herald-Dispatch, the turf will be installed and be ready for the 2009 season opener. The Highlanders' first home game under first-year Coach Bill Seals is Sept. 4 against Spring Valley.

Huntington is the seventh Mountain State Athletic Conference to make the move to artificial turf for its football facility. The school follows Capital, George Washington (at UC Stadium), Parkersburg, Princeton, Greenbrier East and Ripley in abandoning natural grass.

Huntington opens the season at 2008 Class AAA champion South Charleston on Aug. 28.

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