

Assistant Boys Coach of the Year

Phil Stowers - J. S. Morton High School

Phil Stowers, assistant coach at Morton, began his coaching career at Ursuline Academy in Springfield in 1994. More recently, after a nine-year stint as the head coach at Morton, he stepped into the assistant role in 2014 so that he could spend more time with his family.

Here are Phil's thoughts about the 2015 Mustang season:

"This past season was a good example of what can happen when you work with good kids who work hard. We almost never get students at Morton who have ever played tennis, but this can come with some advantages. In many cases, students are hungry to learn and improve. As a JV coach, it is absolutely cool to see how much a player can grow in a year or two. I see my job as getting players ready for the varsity level, and we try to focus on long-term development."

Phil's coaching philosophy with inexperienced kids at Morton can be summed up below:

"I tell them there is a lot about tennis they can't control. They can influence the score, but they can't control it. Often, they are going to be playing opponents from other schools with more experience or students with better equipment or access to private coaching and lessons. But we do encourage them to control what they can. They can control their attitudes; they can control their sportsmanship; they can control their strategy."

Morton's head coach, Angela Tomkins, said the following about Phil:

"I'm honored to work with an amazing coach like Phil Stowers. He's a coach, teacher, motivator, disciplinarian, role model, husband, and father. Phil understands the developmental stage that our athletes start the season with. He is someone who educates and encourages our players - who leads our team by example. Phil is an amazing coach and loved by all his athletes, students, fellow staff members, and fellow coaches."

Congratulations, Phil, on your 2015 IHSTCA Assistant Girls Coach of the Year award!