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Sports

Rittenhouse moves up the MSU ladder

Lori Rittenhouse is here to tell you Thomas Wolfe was wrong — you CAN go home again.

Rittenhouse, a former volleyball standout for both Mankato West High School and the University of Wisconsin, has recently been promoted from part-time graduate assistant coach to full-time assistant coach with the Minnesota State University volleyball program.

It's safe to say she's enjoying herself.

"It's a beautiful thing," she said this week. "I love getting those paychecks every two weeks and I really enjoy my job."

Rittenhouse was married in

June to Mankato West teacher and coach Chris Wollmuth and now goes by the name of Rittenhouse-Wollmuth. She replaces Heather Bitz, who left to become a graduate assistant at Division I South Dakota State.

When Rittenhouse-Wollmuth signed on a graduate assistant two years ago, she dared to hope it might one day lead to the full-time assistant job. She didn't think it would happen at MSU, however, until Bitz started talking last year about possibly moving on.

One of the qualifications for the job was a master's degree and Rittenhouse-Wollmuth became eligible in May when she received her advanced degree in

sports management. Considering her credentials, it's no surprise head coach Dennis Amundson tabbed Rittenhouse-Wollmuth for the position.

A three-sport standout at Mankato West who was an All-State player in both volleyball and basketball, she attended Wisconsin where she was a four-time All-Academic Big Ten selection. She helped the Badgers to a pair of Big Ten championships and was a member of the national runner-up squad that fell to Nebraska.

"Having Lori on our staff is tremendous," coach Amundson said. "It's interesting because I recruited her while I was coaching at the U and she ended up going to Wisconsin. She drove us



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Lori Rittenhouse-Wollmuth, now a full-time assistant at Minnesota State, has ambitions of someday heading a college volleyball program.

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nuts for two years taking her team to the Final Four.

"But more importantly, her coaching philosophies are very similar to mine. She has a lot more responsibility this year and the players love her. She has a bright future as a coach."

Now that she's full-time, Rittenhouse-Wollmuth is more involved in recruiting, practice planning, running of drills and scouting.

While she's glad to be working in her hometown,

she realizes it may not be forever.

"The way my career path seems to be going, I think being a head coach of a college program could be a long-term goal," she said. "Right now I'm just enjoying myself and trying to learn as much as I can under coach (Amundson)."

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