

# Mahoney resigning as basketball coach

Oriskany head coach Chris Mahoney is all smiles after his basketball team capped a perfect 2015-16 season with a 79-54 victory over Moriah in the Class D final of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Championships at the Glens Falls Civic Center. [O-D FILE PHOTO]



**Led undefeated Oriskany to a Class D state title two years ago**

**By Ron Moshier**  
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It was a team, a season, and a game Chris Mahoney will never forget.

The "perfect storm" is what he called it back then, back when his Oriskany boys basketball team took the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Championships and the Glens Falls Civic Center by storm.

"I was thinking, 'We're going

**About Chris Mahoney**

**Age:** 34

**Hometown:** Yorkville

**High School:** Notre Dame, Class of 2001.

**For the record:** Was 89-26 with three league titles, one Section III championship, and one Class D state title in five years at Oriskany.

to cool down some time,' but we never did," Mahoney said that memorable March night, after Oriskany had put the finishing touches on a perfect, 27-0 season with a 79-54 win over previously

unbeaten and top-ranked Moriah team in the Class D state championship game. "What more could you ask for? To win by 25 points in the state championship game and finish 27-0? That's pretty special."

So, too, were the four other seasons Mahoney spent as Oriskany's head coach - a brief, but remarkably rewarding run that ended Tuesday when he told his players that he was resigning.

The 34-year-old Mahoney, who three weeks ago became a father, girl friend Danielle

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Valenti and their daughter, McKenna, have relocated in the Albany area.

"I officially told the kids today," he said. "It was pretty tough. It's sad, but it's the right move. It's the next chapter of my life. I'm going to miss it a lot, the friendships I've developed with the students and the staff. ... I'm glad I had the opportunity to build a program."

Mahoney, a home-grown coach from Yorkville, was a star at New York Mills High School and later at Notre Dame, where he played basketball for Hall of Fame coach Mike Durr. As a junior, he helped the Notre Dame boys basketball team reach the finals of the state tournament, and a year later he was a senior member of a



**The Oriskany boys basketball team huddles around head coach Chris Mahoney after calling a timeout during the Class D state championship game at the Glens Falls Civic Center on March 12, 2016. Oriskany's win over Moriah capped a 27-0 season.** [O-D FILE PHOTO]

Notre Dame baseball team that won a state championship in 2001.

As Oriskany's head coach, Mahoney had an 89-26 record, and his teams won three Center State Conference division titles in his five seasons.

This year's Oriskany team

won another CSC championship, finished 20-3 overall and was ranked No. 19 in the final Class D state poll. Oriskany won 15 straight games before losing to state-ranked defending champion Madison in the Section III semifinals.

"He taught me a lot, and

not just about basketball," said Oriskany senior Ricky Phelps, a 1,000-point scorer who led this year's team in scoring and was a sophomore standout on the state championship. "It was his constant drive to get better. He always made it clear to us that we should never be satisfied, that we should keep trying to be better."

It doesn't get any better than the 2015-16 season, and the unbeaten Oriskany team that set a state-tournament record by draining 15 three-pointers in the Class D final against Moriah. Senior Anthony Warcup had six of those 3s, scored 25 points and was named MVP of the Class D state tournament. Senior guard Marcus Smithling led all scorers with 25 points and senior Ryan Schmadel - Oriskany's all-time scoring leader with 1,746 points - added 18 points.

"It was a special group

of guys," Mahoney said. "It was their desire to get better every day, to challenge each other every day in practice, to set their goals higher. Making that run to the states, how we did it and putting Oriskany on the map ... I'm not going to forget that. I'm not going to forget any of those seasons."

Oriskany will return several players from this year's 20-3 team, including Aaron Warcup, Brandon Reid, Colton Davis and Matt Enos.

"Our basketball program really bought into his philosophy and his system," Tom Meiss, Oriskany's Director of Athletics, said of Mahoney. "In five years, he was able to instill a winning culture."

Mahoney, who has been teaching at Upstate Cerebral Palsy, has not ruled out a return to coaching in the Albany area.

"I'm going to explore a lot of different options," he said.