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## New Hope, Sutton set for debut on court

### ▶ BASKETBALL:

Former York High star is first head coach of the Mighty Ants.

By **DICK VanOLINDA**  
*The York Dispatch*

Sam Sutton enjoyed living in Baltimore.

It's where he went to college and played NCAA Division I college basketball at Towson University.

Plus, Sutton was doing well there in a sales job and coaching a youth basketball team.

But when an opportunity came along to work with young people in York, Sutton returned to his roots.

The former York High School star is the first head coach of the New Hope Academy Charter School boys' basketball team.

Sutton is also Dear of Students and athletic director at

New Hope, which is located in the former St. Rose of Lima School at 459 W. King St.



**Scholastic  
Spotlight**

New Hope was founded by former York High boys' basketball coach Isiah Anderson.

He'll make his coaching debut on Friday night when New Hope takes on Lancaster Country Day in the second game of the Lancaster Christian Tip-Off Tournament.

"There's a high level of excitement about playing our first game, but I have butterflies, too," Sutton said. "Working with kids is my passion, and I wanted to lend a helping hand."

**Young squad:** Sutton's team, along with having a unique nickname (Mighty Ants), also is unique in that there are no juniors or seniors on the roster and just one sophomore. The school currently doesn't have either 11th or 12th grades.

"We have 12 freshmen, all city kids, along with one sophomore," Sutton said. "We've been really pushing the kids. A lot of

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calisthenics plus we've been running up Reservoir Hill.

"We're not going to have one star player, not with a team of freshmen. It's always been amazing to me to be outside and see a group of ants and watch them move a piece of bread. That's what our players are going to have to do: all pull together to get us where we want to go."

Sutton was the first York High player in 24 years to earn a Division I college basketball scholarship (he started at St. Francis of Pennsylvania before transferring to Towson). And no Bearcats' player has done it since Sutton graduated in 1997.

"Every drill, everything I learned, I'm going to be passing along to them," he said. "But this isn't just about basketball. I tell the kids that playing in the NBA is like hitting the lottery. You need to have a plan for what you're going to do when you leave here. We expect everyone to do something post graduation. If not college, then military or a trade school."

Sutton's young team will undoubtedly hit some rough spots going up against established programs with older players. But he can't picture himself doing anything else.

"I would be lying if I said I said I didn't miss Baltimore," he said. "But I'm where I want to be."

"I went back and got out a media guide from my freshman year, and it said in there that I wanted to teach and coach after college. I knew that when I was 17 years old."

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