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Georgia Southern University

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Bob DeBesse Named Offensive Coordinator of Georgia Southern Football

New Mexico enjoyed record-setting success under his six-year watch

Bob DeBesse has been named the offensive coordinator of Georgia Southern football's staff as announced Wednesday by head coach Chad Lunsford. DeBesse (@CoachDeBesse) comes to Statesboro after a record-setting six-year run as the offensive coordinator at New Mexico, where his rushing offense posted five consecutive top-10 national rankings in rushing yards per game, including the top attack in 2016, but also featured a potent aerial attack when needed.

"I am thrilled to add Bob DeBesse to our staff as the offensive coordinator," Lunsford said. "I wanted to make sure that we got someone who understood what Georgia Southern Football is all about and that is exactly what we got. Bob knows the option offense and he brings three decades of coaching knowledge and experience to our program. The process of hiring the right offensive coordinator had to be thorough and we took our time to get the right guy. I feel like we did just that and I can't wait to get started with him and watch him build on what's already in place here offensively."

Under DeBesse's watch, the Lobos finish fifth in 2012, fourth in 2013, fifth in 2014, ninth in 2015 and first in 2016. The 2016 Lobos set a school record for points (477) and scoring average, averaging 36.7 points per game, and also featured two 1,000 yard rushers for the first time in school history. It also featured Teriyon Gipson, who led the nation in yards per attempt, averaging 8.75 yards per carry. In 2017, the Lobos' again finished in the top 20 nationally in rushing offense, averaging over 230 yards per game on the ground.

"I'm really excited to come to what I consider a tradition-rich program in Georgia Southern," DeBesse said. "Everyone knows about Georgia Southern Football. I remember when Erk Russell started the program and I remember Tracy Ham and the Eagles winning national championships. Georgia Southern is about running the football and I know that's the identity of the program. I'm honored to come to a place like that and to be at a place where football is incredibly important. This is a place where you want to be and a place where expectations are high. I was very impressed with Chad Lunsford throughout the entire interview process. He has a great plan, is a genuine guy and is Georgia Southern through and through. I'm honored and excited to get started."

In the 2015 season, the Lobos led the nation in total plays of 60 or more yards (11) and 70 or more yards (7). The Lobos added a deadly aerial attack as well and the team threw three touchdown passes of 80 or more yards in the final five games of the season, the most 80-yard completions in the history of UNM for a single season. The Lobo rushing attack again finished in the top 10 nationally. Jhurell Pressley, who ended his career with the second-most rushing touchdowns in school history.

In the 2014 season, UNM once again finished in the top five in rushing nationally, finishing fourth, averaging 310.4 yards per game. The Lobos were the only team in the nation to have finished in the top five from 2012-14 with an average of 300 yards or more, and that was all under DeBesse.

The Lobos were certainly explosive as well. Aside from Pressley leading the nation with a 9.6 yards per carry average, UNM ranked in the top three nationally in most
runs of 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60 yards for the season, leading the nation in most 50 and 60 yard rushes (14 and 10 respectively).

The 2013 offense's 40 rushing touchdowns were two shy of the 1971 team record of 42. The unit also produced 5,062 yards, becoming just the sixth Lobo offensive unit to surpass the 5,000-yard mark. In 2012, the Lobos had the most improved rushing offense in the nation, going from 113.3 yards per game (ranking 103rd in rushing in ’11) to 301.3 yards per game (ranking fifth in ’12).

DeBesse went to New Mexico after a highly successful two-year stint as the offensive coordinator at Sam Houston State, which finished as national championship runner-up in the Football Championship Subdivision in 2011. The Bearkats averaged 36.9 points per game in 2011 with a 1,000-yard rusher in Tim Flanders (1,644 yards) and another one just shy of 1,000 yards in Richard Sincere (979 yards), as well as a 2,000-yard passer in quarterback Brian Bell (2,609 yards).

In his first season, DeBesse led the Kats to the top of the Southland Conference in rushing offense and had three players earn all-league honors.

DeBesse served as wide receivers coach at Texas A&M from 2006-07. As wide receivers coach, DeBesse helped direct Texas A&M squads to the 2006 Holiday Bowl and the 2007 Alamo Bowl.

Purdue employed DeBesse as wide receivers coach from 2003-05, where he mentored Taylor Stubblefield. Stubblefield was a consensus All-America selection and Biletnikoff Award finalist in 2004, setting a then-NCAA record with 316 receptions. In 2003, Boilermakers WR John Standeford set Big Ten records for receptions (broken by Stubblefield) and receiving yards with 3,788.

Prior to his arrival at Purdue, DeBesse was the head coach at Southwest Texas State from 1997-2002. His 2000 team went 7-4, the best mark by the school in a decade, and had a No. 24 national ranking in the NCAA Division I-AA final poll.

DeBesse served as offensive coordinator at the University of Minnesota from 1992-96. His units led the Big Ten in passing offense in 1992, 1993 and 1996 and led the Big Ten in passing offense in conference games in 1994 and ’95.

Before coming to Minnesota, DeBesse spent nine years (1983-91) at TCU, the last two years as offensive coordinator. From 1988-90, he coached alongside Rocky Long and earned Southwest Conference Offensive Coordinator of the Year honors in 1990. As quarterbacks coach, DeBesse helped the Horned Frogs earn an invitation to the Bluebonnet Bowl in 1984.

DeBesse was a three-year letterman at Southwest Texas State from 1978 to 1980. He was special teams captain and a Texas All-Academic team selection as a senior. DeBesse spent two years as a student assistant for SWT teams that won NCAA Division II national championships in 1981 and 1982. He was elected to the Southwest Texas State Hall of Honor in 1998.

Growing up in Texas, DeBesse earned a bachelor's degree in education from Southwest Texas State in 1982. He and his wife Janet, a former Southwest Texas gymnast and cheerleader, have three children: Britney, Kaila and Cameron. Cameron lettered as a wide receiver for the Lobos in 2012 and 2013.

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