

# Beschorner takes charge

## O-C holds down post as USD looks for head coach

By **Jeremy Hoeck**

jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net

Wes Beschorner is usually a busy man this time of year.

But now, he's got a lot more on his plate.

The 29-year-old former quarterback and third-year offensive coordinator was appointed the interim head football coach at the University of South Dakota on Wednesday, Nov. 23, a day after Ed Meierkort was fired.

Beschorner now inherits the responsibility of guiding the Division I football program through the prime recruiting months, on top of his normal off-season duties.

And that doesn't even include his expressed interest in applying for the job on a permanent basis.

"We just want to sell the University of South Dakota to recruits, and the good thing is, it sells itself," Beschorner said Friday from his office in the DakotaDome. "The success we have is based on the kids we continue to get, but the program will be here a lot longer than any one person."

"Being an alum, for me, that's more important than

any one person's glory," he added. "It's about getting the right kids here."

The Iowa native finished his sixth season as an assistant, third as offensive coordinator, at USD this season, where he guided the Great West Conference's second-best rushing offense (158.2 yards).

With Beschorner calling a majority of the plays, the Coyotes scored a touchdown in all but one game – this season at Illinois State – over the last three seasons. Arguably the biggest performance in that span was a 41-38 upset of Big Ten Conference member Minnesota in 2010.

Still, Beschorner said he is well aware of the challenges ahead. NCAA signing day is two months away, Feb. 1, 2012, and the Coyote coaching staff will have to not only reassure committed recruits but will have to convince potential recruits that the program is headed in the right direction.

"Whoever ends up getting the job, you'll feel like you're behind in recruiting no matter what," Beschorner said. "The assistants have done a good

job identifying guys we think belong here and can help us win. Kids will be told a bunch of different things about USD, but the bottom line is we're 40-5 at home.

"That's got a lot to do with the coaches here on staff and the ones who have been here before."

Following the Nov. 22 decision by athletic director David Saylor to not renew Meierkort's contract, the remainder of the USD coaching staff was retained to guide the program through the recruiting process.

The news of Meierkort's firing was a bit surprising to those on staff, Beschorner said.

"From the beginning, when Ed told me, I was a little bit in shock," he said. "It was one of those things where you felt like one or two more wins and it's darn near impossible to make changes, especially knowing where we're at and where we came from."

When Beschorner got to USD in the fall of 2001, the Coyotes were coming off an 8-3 season under former coach John Austin. Over the next three years, the program had a record of 10-22 before Meierkort was hired after the 2003 season.

With Beschorner as the starting quarterback, USD posted back-to-back 9-2 records in 2004 and 2005, and clinched a share of the North Central Conference title in 2005.

"When I got to school here, USD football was not



South Dakota offensive coordinator Wes Beschorner talks to quarterback Dante Warren, 2, during a Coyote home game this past season. Beschorner, the 29-year-old former Coyote QB who has been a USD assistant coach for six seasons, was named the interim head coach after head coach Ed Meierkort was told his contract will not be renewed.

(P&D File Photo)

that relevant; hadn't had much success at all," Beschorner said. "So, to get that turned around in the next 10 years and to be ranked in the top 25 for 10 straight weeks (this season), I have a lot of pride in that."

That feeling is shared by those players who have eligibility remaining with the Coyotes, Beschorner said.

"Our guys, from the day we recruited them and ever since, are resilient young men; they fight through a lot of stuff," he said. "We've had to go through a lot of different things here. We've

played every different kind of team in every different atmosphere, and had some success."

Beschorner didn't shy away from USD's late-season struggles, saying that will be a point of improvement for those players coming back. The Coyotes (6-5) had two chances to win a share of the Great West championship, but lost both road games to close the season – blowing fourth-quarter leads at Cal Poly and North Dakota.

"The guys will look to the off-season as a chance to get better, that's the number one thing," he said. "They'll ask themselves, 'What do I need to do to

help this football team to get to the point of true success in every way."

Though Saylor wasn't in his office Friday, the second-year athletic director made clear earlier this week that a national search for a head coach will begin immediately.

In the meantime, Beschorner was adamant in his interest for the job.

"I'd like to continue that success we've had," he said. "It's something I feel I've helped start in a small way; you have to have that sense of pride. Everyone's got that. With me personally, I feel like I'd be a great fit, but that's obviously very biased on my part."

### Here to Serve Your Insurance Needs

- Full Service Agency - Offering All Lines of Insurance.
- Independent - Representing Many Excellent Companies.
- Locally Owned & Operated.
- Stability - Since 1944.
- Experience - Including 5 Licensed Insurance Agents.
- Very Competitive.
- Competent - Friendly - Courteous.

#### Working For You



BACK: ZACH JENSEN, MARK JENSEN  
MIDDLE: BRAD ANTONSON, ANGIE TWEDT, KATE ERICKSON, BRAD BAK  
FRONT: HEATHER IVARSEN, PAM BERG, NATALIE JOHNSON

### Let Us Earn Your Business!

JENSEN INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE

124 N. 3rd St., Beresford, SD  
763-2675 or 1-800-658-3539



www.jensenagencyonline.com



## su|do|ku

© 2008 KrazyDad.com

Fill the puzzle so that every row, every column, and every section contain the numbers 1-9 without repeating a number

	4							9
8	2				7			
				3	6	7		
7	6		8					
		2		4		9		
					9		5	6
		3	5	8				
			1				6	3
9								

Check today's issue for the solution to the puzzle.

INT Book 27 #3



MISSOURI VALLEY SHOPPER

**WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE**  
Paying \$200 & up  
Cars • Pick-ups • Trucks • Trailers  
Call The Car Crushing King 605.202.0899

### FARMLAND FOR SALE

Elk Point, South Dakota

308 total dry land acres, approximately 294 tillable acres located in Township Ninety (90) North, Union County, South Dakota. Property is approximately 15 minutes North of Sioux City, Iowa on I-29 along the Big Sioux River.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REQUEST A BID PACKAGE**

contact Doug Brown at 402-431-5265 or Dave Wilwerding at 402-498-2224.

**Bidding will close December 16, 2011.**