

University Of South Dakota Steps Up To The Plate To Hire Nielson

BY JEREMY HOECK

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BOB
NIELSON

The realization that the University of South Dakota was doing things a little differently than it had in the past was perhaps driven home Monday when athletic department officials took a ride on a jet to pick up their new football coach.

The other, more pressing, realization facing USD in the pursuit of a coach was that it was going to have to drastically increase the base salary for that position.

"If you're going to be competitive, you've got to pay competitively," athletic director David Herbster said Tuesday, after Bob Nielson was introduced as the next Coyote head coach.

With that in mind, USD and Nielson agreed to a base salary of \$255,000. That marks a 71 percent increase from what former Coyote coach Joe Glenn was making (\$145,000) when he retired.

That jump also thrusts Nielson into the top-5 among highest-paid coaches in the Missouri Valley Football Conference.

According to media reports and available salary reports, North Dakota State coach Chris Klieman makes the most, at \$326,000 per year. Then comes Illinois State coach Brock Spack (\$300K), Northern Iowa coach Mark Farley (\$296K), Missouri State coach Dave Steckel (\$270K) and Nielson.

The 56-year-old Nielson had been making \$206,000 per year at Western Illinois, where he was this season named the Coach of the Year in the Missouri Valley.

Now that the salary for its new coach is set, USD's next task, Herbster said, is to ensure that the salary pool is such that Nielson can attract the kind of staff that can also make the Coyotes competitive within the league.

"That's a big part of it," Herbster said. "We made an investment in the things we needed to do to address the

football program. That's getting Bob and then allowing him to get a staff here."

Asked during his introductory press conference Tuesday about the makeup of his staff, Nielson said that's a process he hopes to have completed by the end of the week.

Not known is the future of USD associate head coach/offensive coordinator Wes Beschoner. In terms of salary for that position, Beschoner is listed as making \$68,000, while South Dakota State associate head coach Eric Eidsness, for example, is making \$73,000.

It was the overall vision of the football program, not just the salaries, that Nielson said ultimately led him to leave Western Illinois, where he spent three seasons.

"Part of the decision to come here was based on the future," said Nielson, who boasts 186 wins in his 23-year coaching career.

And a big aspect of that future in Vermillion has to do with the football facilities at the DakotaDome.

Construction is still ongoing for USD's three athletic facility projects, totaling \$66 million, which includes the 6,000-seat arena, an outdoor track complex and a 2-field soccer complex.

Improving the football facilities would be next on the to-do list, Herbster said.

"We've invested in the student-athlete, we've invested in the staff, now we've got to invest in the facilities," he said.

That was once part of USD's 2015 Master Plan for Athletic Facilities, but the project was essentially tabled for attention down the road. The plans called for, among other things, seating

on the west side of the DakotaDome (which would increase capacity to 16,000 for football), plus expanded space for locker rooms, meeting rooms and coaches offices.

Any work on those plans would have to wait, Herbster pointed out, until the arena is ready next fall.

"We can't do much with that west side until we get everyone out of the dome, so then we can start to attack it," Herbster said.

A common theme during Nielson's speech, and subsequent responses to media questions, was about USD's "vision" – he called it "strong leadership holds a bold vision."

Facilities, naturally, are part of that long-term future.

"They've done a great job here already, identifying the facility needs for football," Nielson said.

Even though USD's Sports Performance Enhancement Complex (or SPEC) doesn't directly involve the football program, Nielson said the facility's sports medicine and strength & conditioning resources will have an impact.

"And the next steps that are being referenced will be the final pieces that from a football standpoint will be important," Nielson said.

Asked about leaving Western Illinois for such an opportunity, Nielson got as emotional as he did at any point, saying that leaving is "never easy; I don't like doing it."

"And I hope this is the last time I do that," he added.

Nielson, a decade younger than Glenn, continually pointed out that at his age, relationships are "extremely important."

"I feel like I've got hopefully 12 to 15 really good years left," he said, "and I want to invest those years at a place that truly is committed to doing things the right way."

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DENR Announces Hearing To Reissue General Permit CAFOs Continued Until Next Year

PIERRE – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary has granted a continuance for the contested case hearing to reissue the General Water Pollution Control Permit for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. The hearing, which was scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 16, will be rescheduled for early next year.

DENR will announce the hearing date, time and location after consulting with the parties to the contested case hearing, their attorneys and witnesses. The Order for Continuance and other information will also be available on the DENR Feedlot Permit Program's website at <http://denr.sd.gov/des/fp/cafo.aspx>.

On Oct. 8, the Department's Feedlot Permit Program gave public notice of the reissuance of the proposed general permit and a Dec. 16 contested case hearing date on the general permit. The public notice was published in 10 daily newspapers, sent to 931 interested parties, and posted to DENR's One Stop Public Notice website at <http://denr.sd.gov/public/>. Interested persons were required to file a petition to intervene in the contested case hearing by Nov. 20.

One of the intervening parties, Dakota Rural Action, filed a motion for a continuance on Tuesday, Dec. 8. The motion requested more time to prepare for the hearing. The Secretary, acting as hearing chair for the contested case hearing, granted the request.

Nielson

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alone the reigning Coach of the Year, but we did it because he believes in what we're doing," Herbster said.

And what USD is doing is trying to continue its climb up the Missouri Valley ladder.

Highlighted by a win over North Dakota State, the Coyotes this past season remained in playoff contention until a 7-point loss to South Dakota State and then a season-ending 46-0 loss at Illinois State.

The key, Nielson said, is avoid those ebbs and flows.

"They demonstrated they can beat the best teams in the Missouri Valley Conference, so what we'll need to do is build on that and become a more consistent football team," Nielson said.

While at Western Illinois, Nielson compiled a 16-21 record, but his program improved from five league wins over his first two seasons to five conference victories this season – including top-25 wins over Missouri Valley teams Northern Iowa and South Dakota State.

"If you can be among the top, you'll have a chance to play for a national championship," Nielson said. "If I didn't believe we could accomplish that here, I wouldn't be here."

That's where USD's vision played a big role.

Herbster identified Tuesday three areas crucial for the progression of the Coyote program: Cost of attendance (which USD will begin implementing in stages in 2016-17), hiring an "incredible" coach, and facilities.

"We've invested in the student-athletes, we've invested in the staff, now we've got to invest in the facilities," Herbster said.

USD will open its new outdoor track complex this spring and its new soccer complex this fall, while the Sports Performance Enhancement Area will see its first action a year from now. Once those projects are in the rearview mirror, the university can begin the long-awaited football upgrades to the DakotaDome – from expanded seating on the west end to improved office spaces.

All of those factors came into play when Nielson began seriously considering the USD position, he said.

"It's funny how opportunities present themselves and hit at the right time," Nielson said. "That's really what this situation was all about."

"It was the right opportunity the right people at a time when it made sense to me."

Among Nielson's first orders of business? Finalizing his coaching staff, which he said he hopes to have completed by the end of the week.

Small Retailers Face Many Hurdles During The Holiday Season

BY STANLEY NAKANO

SaBa's Acting Region VIII Administrator

Small seasonal retailers can earn 50 percent or more of total annual sales during the critical holiday shopping period between Black Friday and New Year's Day. The business choices made during this critical period can directly affect a small firm's cash flow for the entire year. The

SBA has compiled the following list of the top six hurdles small retailers face during the busy holiday season.

1. Lack of inventory control. Inventory control is crucial for all small retailers, especially during the busy holiday sales months. It is important to remember that inventory equals profits, and knowing how much product to order, when to order it, and what items to order can make the difference between having cash in the bank or aging inventory on the shelves.

2. Hiring the wrong employees for critical positions. There is a cost to hiring the wrong people for key positions. Small firms tend to have less layers of management between the owner and the employees, therefore new hires must be able to perform with less direct supervision and be motivated to get the job done right the first time. Avoid this issue by writing a detailed job description and training new employees on how you want them to represent your business.

3. Undercapitalization is a

problem no business wants or needs. Cash flow is the life blood of all small businesses. Cash flow allows a business to make payroll, pay suppliers, and keep its doors open. Business owners can immediately increase cash flow by collecting accounts receivables in a timely manner; not keeping too much cash tied up in unnecessary inventory; and eliminating unprofitable account relationships.

4. Not embracing online sales and social media. A recent US Census Bureau report shows that more than \$87 billion in e-commerce sales were made during the third quarter of 2015 – a 4.2 percent increase over the previous quarter. A study by Forrester Research, Inc., showed that by 2017 more than 60 percent of all U.S. retail sales will involve the web. As more consumers use the internet to make holiday purchases, it is imperative that small retailers develop

a retail web presence. Also, leverage Twitter and Facebook to promote one-day sales or plug special product lines and high inventoried merchandise.

5. Not delaying the employee office party and social events. It is sales crunch time from Black Friday until New Year's Day. Office parties can cause distractions at a time when the business needs to be especially productive. Too much food and drink can not only cause a nasty hangover, but sidetrack employee and management's focus. Consider moving the company party until after New Year's Day and call it the annual thank-you event.

6. Innovation and creativity lost. Historically, locally-owned small retailers beat their big box and online competitors by providing outstanding individualized customer service. Black Friday creep has pushed large

retailers into flooding the market with lost leader pricing on a wide array of holiday products. Small retailers should take the offensive by selling creative and innovative products that cannot be found at the local mega mall or online. Create a unique customer experience that will draw shoppers to travel outside of their comfort zone and discover that out of the ordinary shopping district with 10 trendy stores, not 100 traditional chain stores.

For more information on ways the SBA can assist your small business this holiday season, visit www.sba.gov.

Stanley Nakano serves as the SBA's Acting Region VIII Administrator and is based in Salt Lake City. He oversees the agency's programs and services in Colorado, Montana, Utah, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

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