

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

New Umatilla High School head football coach Chad Smith directs running plays Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2021, during a practice at the high school.

Smith takes over Umatilla football program

Durfey stepped down to spend more time with his family

BY ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

UMATILLA — Dan Durfey has put in his time.

From the moment his son, Trent, began Grid Kids football, through this past season at Umatilla High School, Durfey has been calling plays on the sidelines.

Now that Trent will be a sophomore at Carroll College, Durfey wants to see his son play college football.

"I decided last fall when we got done," Durfey said of resigning. "I tried to go watch Trent play during the season. I thought, this isn't going to work. We'd leave after a game, get to Coeur d'Alene at 2 a.m., then get up early and just make it to his game. I decided not to do that any more. At least until he's done. It's actually pretty nice right now not worrying about the paperwork."

In his five years leading the Vikings, Durfey had a 19-21 record. During that time, he was able to coach his son and hundreds of other kids.

"I coached Trent in Grid Kids," Durfey said. "In middle school I was going to kick back and be a dad, but they didn't have a coach and they asked me. Then I became the defensive coordinator at the high school, and that turned into the head job. Some of these kids have seen me since Grid Kids."

Durfey will be replaced by Chad Smith, 34, who has a long coaching history despite his age.

"Last year, I sat out with COVID going on, and I was finishing my administrative license," Smith said. "That year off, I missed coaching and I knew I wanted to get back into it."

Smith also will teach at the alternative school in Umatilla.

"I will work with kids who need to make up credits or who are getting their GED," he said.

Smith graduated from Sweet Home High School in 2005, and

Smith was an assistant at 6A Sheldon from 2005-06. He also assisted at Sprague (2008-10) and Mercer Island, Washington (2017).

Other head coaching jobs on Smith's resume include Seaside (2016, 2-6 record), Siuslaw (2018, 0-8) and Cottage Grove (2019, 0-8).

At Umatilla, Smith said he will have six to eight seniors and a lot of underclassmen.

"I got a survey back from about



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Chad Smith, the new Umatilla High School head football coach, works with players Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2021, during a practice at the high school.

even though he didn't play football in college, he knew he wanted to coach.

"My first head coaching job was at La Grande (2014, 5-4 record)," he said. "I have been at lot of different places. As an assistant, I saw things I liked and things I didn't. The things I liked I tried to put into my team. I want to make this a great program here on the eastern side of Oregon."

30 players," he said. "Whether they come out Monday is another story. We have some talented players. With work schedules, we haven't seen everybody at the same time. We have been lifting weights since the end of June. We get 12 to 15 kids lifting, then we run through some plays. When we start on Monday, it's all about the fundamentals."

Anthony Brown mentoring Ducks' talented young QBs

By RYAN THORBURN
The (Eugene) Register-Guard

EUGENE — Anthony Brown is currently Oregon's starting quarterback.

The sixth-year senior is also a mentor to the three talented freshmen trying to replace him as the Ducks' QB1.

Brown, who suffered two season-ending injuries at Boston College earlier in his career, said missing playing time provided a different perspective on how to be a team leader.

"Being injured in 2017 and 2019 and not being able to be there as a leader by example, it was just (leading) in the spots I was needed, vocal leadership," Brown said. "Being a leader for this team is going to be very dynamic, and we're just going to have to see where it goes because we have tons of leaders."

So far, Oregon's young signal-callers have raved about Brown's willingness to help them on the field and in the quarterback room.

Robby Ashford and Jay Butterfield, two 2020 recruits, spent last season learning from Brown behind starter Tyler Shough.

"AB, that's a brother to me," Ashford said of Brown. "We clicked when I first got here. He took me under his wing."

Brown didn't transfer until April 2020 and was unable to overtake Shough for the starting spot during the pandemic-shortened fall camp.

Offensive coordinator Joe Moorhead finally called Brown's number during the Pac-12 championship game and Fiesta Bowl. Shough transferred to Texas Tech in February.

Even though the three freshmen performed well during the spring game, Brown entered fall camp with a comfortable lead in the competition to be the 2021 starter.

"AB has played a lot of football at a very high level," Moorhead said after an recent practice. "The guy has thrown for almost 6,000 yards and 60 touchdowns and been in a bunch of different offenses. He's a super smart kid, he's got a great presence about him, very mature."

"I think he always takes the opportunity to share some of that wisdom with the young guys, and they're also very receptive to his teaching."

Touted 2021 recruit Ty Thompson enrolled early to join the fray during spring practice. The true freshman from Gilbert, Arizona, is the highest ranked quarterback prospect to ever sign with the Ducks.

"I've just leaned on (Brown) when I make a mistake in practice or I'm just picking his brain in the meeting room," Thompson said. "He's very knowledgeable. He's been at this for six years now, so he knows a lot more than me. I'm really blessed to have someone like AB mentor me and the other guys in the room as well."

"When I make a mistake, he's coaching me up or he's just tweaking something that maybe I'm doing a little bit different. He's a very big blessing for sure."

Mario Cristobal and his staff have put together a roster that is expected to contend for a third consecutive Pac-12 championship and be in the mix for the College Football Playoff.

One of the biggest questions entering the season for many observers of the program is: Can Brown get the job done?

"I hate how people think he isn't good and all this," Ashford said. "They just don't know, that's the thing. I get to see it every day. I love just watching and see how they are hating on him. I just know he's going to come back and do some special things here."



Sean Meagher/The Oregonian, File

Oregon quarterback Anthony Brown (13) reads the defense during the spring game in Eugene in May 2021.

SPORTS SHORT

Oregon promotes Jodie Berry to associate head coach

By JAMES CREPEA
The Oregonian

EUGENE — Oregon formally announced the promotion Tuesday, Aug. 10, of assistant women's basketball coach Jodie Berry to associate head coach.

"I'm thrilled to be able to elevate Jodie to associate head coach," Oregon coach Kelly Graves said in a statement. "The relationships she builds with our student-athletes and the example that she sets for them on and off the court has been instrumental to the program's success. Jodie and I have worked together for a long time and I consider her a great friend and trust her with everything. There is no one more deserving of this opportunity than her."

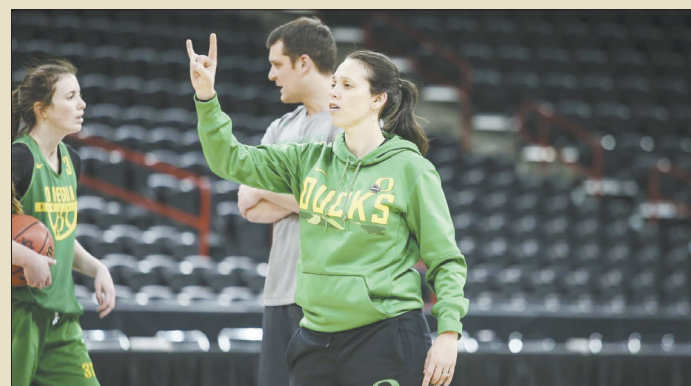
The lone returning assistant on Graves' staff, Berry worked with him for 16 seasons and currently works with

the post players and assists in scouting and recruiting.

Earlier this summer she signed a one-year extension through June 30, 2022, for \$200,000, up from the \$179,152 she earned in 2019-20 and \$161,237 she earned last season due to a 10% reduction amid the pandemic.

"I am both humbled and honored to continue my coaching journey here at the University of Oregon," Berry said in a statement. "I am proud to be a part of the Duck Family and cherish the many relationships within the athletic community here at Oregon. I will forever be grateful for the mentorship and guidance that Coach Graves has provided over the past 20 years and am excited for the future of Oregon women's basketball with Jackie, Mike, Brielle, Oti and our team. Go Ducks."

Among the players Berry has coached at Oregon were All-Americans Ruthy Hebard and Jillian Alleyne. While at Gonzaga, she coached five All-Americans.



University of Oregon/Contributed Photo

Longtime Oregon assistant head coach Jodie Berry was promoted to women's basketball associate head coach on Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2021.