

# Hoffner Steps Down As Head Football Coach

*Posted: Friday, January 27, 2006*

EAU CLAIRE - After seven years as the UW-Eau Claire head football coach, Todd Hoffner is stepping down to accept a coaching position at the University of South Dakota, an NCAA Division II program.

Hoffner's resignation becomes effective February 10. He will take over as the offensive coordinator for Ed Meierkort's Coyotes. Meierkort and Hoffner coached against each other when Meierkort was the head coach at conference rival UW-Stout.

Hoffner leaves Eau Claire tied for second with Ade Olson in all-time football coaching victories behind Hall of Fame coach Link Walker. He finished with a 42-28 (.600 winning percentage) overall record and a 29-20 mark in Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference competition. The Blugolds were actually 40-20 over the last six seasons after they finished 2-8 in his first campaign, losing six games by four or fewer points.

During Hoffner's career at Eau Claire, the Blugolds had six straight winning records in the WIAC, tying for the conference title in 2001 and finishing second or tied for second in 2002, 2004 and 2005.

The Blugolds have been nationally ranked during each of the last five seasons, climbing as high as No. 6 in one poll. In 2001 and 2002, the Blugolds had back-to-back campaigns of 8-2. Hoffner had success against some good programs, beating UW-La Crosse in four of the last five seasons and St. John's University in three of the last five.

Hoffner also took two Blugold teams overseas and won all four of his games in international competition.

The Blugolds had four consecutive WIAC Scholar-Athletes in Bob Schmidt, Mike Bestul, Austin Crow and Dave Maas. Bestul was a two-time first team Academic All-American.

Three Blugolds were selected to participate in the Aztec Bowl with safety Jay Hoyord going in 2001, tight end Brad Newton in 2002 and safety Brent Tieri in 2005.

Among the Hoffner players who earned All-American recognition were running back Darrell Souhrada, offensive tackle Bob Schmidt, strong safety Jay Hoyord, tight end Brad Newton, defensive end Austin Crow, offensive lineman Mike Bestul and safety Brent Tieri.

During the Hoffner years, the Blugold records for career rushing, single season receptions, single season pass completions, single season pass completion percentage and field goals were established.

Hoffner was also involved in several football program improvements including the artificial turf that was installed at Carson Park, the football locker room renovation, the football office complex and a new video editing system.

Director of Athletics Scott Kilgallon said of Hoffner, "We're losing an outstanding coach who is leaving the program in great shape for his successor. We wish Todd, his wife Melodee and his children well as he takes a new direction in his career at the Division II level."

- TP -