

Three Former Mountaineer Assistants Join Speir At WCU

Written by Daniel Hooker

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Western Carolina first-year head football coach Mark Speir today announced the beginnings of his assistant coaching staff. Three members of the previous staff and the director of football operations will remain at WCU, while three coaches will join Speir from Appalachian State. Brad Glenn

has been named the offensive coordinator while Trey Elder will coach the wide receivers and John Holt will take over as the offensive line coach.

"I can't tell you how excited I am to have these coaches join the staff," said Speir. "They are first off high quality men and are also very good coaches and teachers. All three have been a part of winning both Southern Conference and national championships and they know what it takes to recruit and coach winners."

Speir announced today that he will retain the services of current WCU assistant coaches Mark Rhea, Arketa Banks and Chris Collins. Daniel Gibson, the current Director of Football Operations, will also be retained in the same capacity.

Rhea, who served as the interim head coach through WCU's final game of 2011, will again coach the Catamount defensive line and serve as the program's recruiting coordinator. Banks - who played at Elon during Speir's three seasons on staff - returns to the running back coach position in which he held in 2009-10 while Collins, who played at WCU from 2006-10, remains on staff as a defensive assistant working primarily with the secondary.

"I am equally as excited about being able to retain Mark Rhea and Arketa Banks on our full-time staff. Both are quality men and recruiters and will be a tremendous help us as we transition from the old coaching staff to the new," Speir added.

Speir hopes to complete his coaching staff with at least two additional hires this week.

Glenn just completed his seventh year at Appalachian State, spending the past three seasons as the quarterbacks coach while also serving one year as tight ends coach (2005) and three working with the slot receivers (2006-08). He comes to Cullowhee with coordinator experience at two different high schools as well as two seasons at North Greenville College from 2002-03. While at ASU, Glenn coached six All-Southern Conference honorees, most notably mentoring the last two SoCon Offensive Players of the Year in Armanti Edwards and DeAndre Presley. Edwards additionally garnered the Walter Payton Award honoring the nation's top NCAA Division I FCS player.

A native of Seneca, S.C., Glenn started his coaching career as the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Greer (S.C.) High School from 1995 through 2000, helping lead the program to a 25-3 overall record and back-to-back South Carolina Upper-State runner-up finishes in 1999 and 2000. He got his start at the collegiate ranks in 2001 at Elon coaching tight ends before spending the next two seasons at North Greenville College as the offensive coordinator. He returned to the high school ranks for a season in his hometown at Seneca High (2004) before being hired at Appalachian State.

Glenn is a 1995 graduate of Clemson University. He is married to the former Anna Thompson and the couple has two daughters - Zoey and Landry.

"Brad (Glenn) brings a wealth of knowledge of the spread offense," Speir said. "He has mentored and coached two Walter Payton Award finalists in Armanti Edwards and DeAndre

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Presley. I am excited about his experience as an offensive coordinator."

Speir's two other new hires both were a part of three-consecutive national championship squads at Appalachian State as undergraduates. John Holt played along the offensive line from 2004-07 while Trey Elder was a quarterback who posted a 7-1 overall record as a starter including a perfect 4-0 mark in 2007 in guiding the Mountaineers to their third-straight title.

"John (Holt) and Trey (Elder) are two tremendous young coaches. They have a ton of energy and passion and are both good, young recruiters. They were a part of winning championships both as players and coaches and that provided them with great experience," said Speir.

Holt has spent the past four years on staff at ASU including three seasons working with the Mountaineer tight ends including coaching four-time All-SoCon selection Ben Jordan during three of his four all-conference seasons.

In 2008, Holt began his coaching career by serving on head coach Jerry Moore's staff in an offensive quality control capacity. His duties included assisting the offensive staff with day-to-day non-coaching duties, specifically offensive line coach Shawn Elliott. Thanks in large part to Holt's efforts, ASU's offense ranked among the nation's top 10 in scoring, rushing, pass efficiency and total offense in '08.

A native of near-by Leicester, N.C., Holt played in 55 of ASU's 56 games during his four-year career (2004-07) including all 15 games as a senior in 2007, serving as a team captain while also earning third team All-America honors from The Sports Network. A versatile offensive lineman, he saw significant playing time at right guard and both tackle positions during his collegiate career.

The son of Michael Joe and Susah Holt, John graduated from ASU in 2008. His brother, Sherman, followed him to Boone, playing for the Mountaineers from 2007-11.

Elder, a four-year letter winner at quarterback from 2004-07, returned to his alma mater in 2010 as the wide receivers coach. In his first season on staff, he coached a trio of receivers - Matt Cline, CoCo Hillary and Brian Quick - that rank among ASU's all-time top 10 in receptions and receiving yards. Quick was a two-time All-American, earning his second honor under Elder after leading the Mountaineer receivers with 71 receptions for 1,096 yards and 11 touchdowns in 2011.

Elder's coaching experience also includes one season at his high school alma mater, Byrnes High in Duncan, S.C., where he served as the wide receivers coach in 2009. He helped lead the Rebels to a 13-2 record and an appearance in the South Carolina 4A Division I state championship game. Under Elder's tutelage, Byrnes' receivers caught 284 passes for 4,655 yards and 60 touchdowns in '09.

Elder, who was South Carolina's Mr. Football as a senior at Byrnes HS in 2003, began his coaching career as a student assistant at ASU in 2008.

A 2008 graduate of Appalachian State, Elder spent much of his career backing up the two greatest signal-callers in Mountaineer history -- Richie Williams and Armanti Edwards. However, he excelled when given the opportunity, posting a 7-1 career record as a starter. He helped lead the Mountaineers to their third-straight national championship by going 4-0 as a starter in 2007 and played an integral part in the Apps' first national title in 2005, when he replaced an injured Williams early in the national semifinals versus Furman and led Appalachian to a 29-23 come-from-behind victory.