

## Whitted, Cardwell Join ASU Football Staff

Written by Mike Flynn

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Nine-year National Football League veteran Alvis Whitted and former Mountaineer tight end Nic Cardwell have joined Appalachian State University's football staff as wide receivers and tight ends coach, respectively, head coach Jerry Moore announced on Wednesday. A Durham, N.C. native, Whitted comes to ASU

after a year as an offensive assistant at UCLA. Prior to beginning his coaching career with the Bruins, Whitted spent nine years in the NFL, playing four seasons with the Jacksonville Jaguars (1998-2001) and five with the Oakland Raiders (2002-06).

Whitted caught 74 passes for 1,030 yards and six touchdowns over nine NFL campaigns. He enjoyed his finest season as a pro in 2006, the final year of his career, when he started 13 games for the Raiders and set career highs for receptions (27) and receiving yards (299). He was also a special-teams standout in the NFL, averaging 18.5 yards per kick return with one touchdown and making 20 tackles over the course of his nine-year career. He played for Jacksonville in the 1999 AFC Championship game and Oakland in Super Bowl XXXVII (2002). He was selected by the Jaguars in the seventh round of the 1998 NFL Draft out of NC State. Whitted amassed 1,929 kickoff return yards for the Wolfpack from 1994-97, which ranked second in NCSU history at the time of his graduation and still ranks third in the program's all-time annals. His 97-yard kickoff return for a touchdown versus Maryland in 1994 and 96-yard return for a score versus Florida State in 1996 remain among the 10 longest kickoff returns in Wolfpack history. As a senior, he received NC State's prestigious H.C. Kennett Award, which recognizes outstanding all-around student-athletes at the university. He received a bachelor's degree from NC State in 1997.

Whitted played as a prep at Orange H.S. in Hillsborough, N.C. with ASU assistant head coach/offensive coordinator Scott Satterfield. In addition to being a gridiron star, Whitted was also a track standout, winning 100- and 200-meter state championships as a senior at Orange and placing sixth in the 200 meters at the 1996 U.S. Olympic Trials.

"Despite being a relatively young coach, Alvis is a very polished student of the game due to his time in the NFL and at UCLA," Moore said. "His most invaluable football experience may have come in his three years as a teammate of Jerry Rice (2002-04 in Oakland) and I see a lot of Jerry in Alvis' work ethic and demeanor. He has what I like to call a 'walk-on' attitude, meaning that like a lot of great players that have walked on to our program at Appalachian, he was not necessarily a highly regarded football prospect when he came out of NC State but with hard work and great attitude, he enjoyed a long and productive NFL career, which is a special trait to me. He is a good fit for our staff and high-quality coach for our players."

Cardwell returns for his second stint as Appalachian's tight ends coach after spending the past seven months as an assistant director of strength and conditioning at ASU, with a direct role in the development of Mountaineer football student-athletes.

He previously served as the Mountaineers' tight ends coach during the 2008 season, when he helped coach freshman Ben Jorden to first-team all-Southern Conference honors before leaving coaching for three years in the private sector.

As a player, Cardwell came to Appalachian as an unheralded walk-on in 2003 and finished his career as a co-captain and three-time national champion. He overcame a career-threatening

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neck injury to play in all 56 games for the Mountaineers from 2004-07. Four of his nine career receptions went for touchdowns, including three postseason scores (one vs. Coastal Carolina in the first round of the 2006 NCAA Division I Football Championship and two vs. Richmond in the 2007 national semifinals).

A Kernersville, N.C. native, Cardwell prepped at Glenn H.S. where he was an all-conference selection as a senior.

“Nic grew up in our program as a player and coach, so our he has a great familiarity with our players and coaches and vice versa,” Moore said. “The thing that makes Nic such a great fit for our program is that he is an overachiever who has worked for everything he has ever received, which is what we strive for all of our players to be. He is also a terrific person who in addition to being a quality coach on the field is someone who will be a great mentor for our players off the field.”

Appalachian is also in the hiring process for its vacant offensive line, running backs and inside linebackers assistant-coaching positions. ASU expects to have its coaching staff officially filled in the coming days.

**Photo Courtesy: Nic Cardwell, ASU Athletics**