

Ledford, Ponce to Serve as Co-Offensive Coordinators

Written by Mike Flynn

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Dwayne Ledford, who is in his second year as Appalachian State University's offensive line coach, and Frank Ponce, a longtime assistant at Florida International University, will serve as Appalachian State's co-offensive coordinators, head coach Scott Satterfield announced on Thursday. Ledford will coordinate the Mountaineers' running game while continuing to coach the offensive linemen while Ponce will coordinate Appalachian's passing game and coach quarterbacks.

Despite inheriting a group that featured no seniors and being forced to start nine different players at 10 different positions throughout the season due to a wide array of injuries and other factors, Ledford coached an offensive line that paved the way for a vastly improved offensive attack in 2012. The Mountaineers averaged 464 yards of total offense per game last season, good for ninth nationally and nearly 74 yards more than they averaged in 2011.

Behind Ledford's unit, Appalachian rushed for 170.3 yards per game last season, surging from 55th to 39th in the national rankings in the span of one season. The Mountaineers also surrendered just 24 sacks under Ledford's tutelage, the sixth fewest in the nation for any team with at least 430 pass attempts.

Ledford came to Appalachian State from Gardner-Webb, where he spent 2011 as the Bulldogs' offensive-line coach. His coaching experience also includes stints at Tennessee State (offensive line - 2010), East Carolina (offensive line graduate assistant - 2008-09), Sanderson (N.C.) H.S. (offensive line - 2007), the Frankfurt Galaxy of NFL Europe (tight ends/tackles - 2007; offensive line intern - 2006) and North Carolina (strength and conditioning assistant - 2005).

He was a four-year letterwinner at East Carolina from 1995-98 before enjoying a seven-year NFL career as an offensive lineman with the San Francisco 49ers, Jacksonville Jaguars, Carolina Panthers, Cleveland Browns and New Orleans Saints.

"Despite being really young on the offensive line, like we will be again in 2013, Coach Ledford did a great job of getting the running game going last season," Satterfield said. "He is a natural choice to serve as co-offensive coordinator so we can continue to expand on the success that we had running the football."

"I am extremely excited to take on the role of co-offensive coordinator at Appalachian State," Ledford said. "I believe in Coach Satterfield's direction for the program and am proud to be a part of a football family that has such great coaches, student-athletes and administrators. I'm looking forward to diving in to my expanded role and continuing to be a part of the tradition and growth of Appalachian State football."

Ponce has spent the past six seasons (2007-12) as the wide receivers coach at Florida International, where he worked under Satterfield for the two seasons that Appalachian's head coach served as FIU's offensive coordinator (2010-11).

Ponce coached six of the top 10 receivers in FIU history during his six seasons with the Golden Panthers. His most notable pupil at FIU was three-time all-American T.Y. Hilton, who went on to be a third-round NFL Draft pick and catch 50 passes for 861 yards and seven touchdowns as a rookie for the Indianapolis Colts in 2012.

Ponce was also renowned for his recruiting ability during his time at FIU and was honored by ESPN.com as the Sun Belt Conference's top recruiter in 2010. During his six seasons at FIU, the Golden Panthers' recruiting classes ranked among the top three in the Sun Belt five times, according to Rivals.com.

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Prior to FIU, Ponce was one of the top high-school coaches in football-rich south Florida, serving as the head coach and offensive coordinator at tradition-laden Miami Senior H.S. from 2004-06 and head coach at Coral Reef H.S. from 2002-03. He began his coaching career with stints as an assistant at La Progresiva Presbyterian School (offensive coordinator - 1992), Coral Gables H.S. (quarterbacks/wide receivers - 1993-96), Miami Northwestern H.S. (quarterbacks - 1998), Miami Central H.S. (offensive coordinator/quarterbacks - 1999-2000) and Miami Killian H.S. (offensive coordinator - 2001). As a high-school coach, he mentored Willis McGahee (Miami Central), who went on to be an all-America running back at the University of Miami and two-time NFL Pro Bowler.

“Coach Ponce is a terrific coach that, thanks to our time together at FIU, has run our offense and knows what we’re trying to do, especially in the passing game,” Satterfield said.

“Additionally, his recruiting prowess, especially in south Florida, will be a great asset to our program going forward.”

“I am very excited and grateful for the opportunity that Coach Satterfield has given me to join the Appalachian State family,” Ponce said. “There is a lot of tradition with the program at Appalachian State and I am excited and blessed to be a part of it. I’m looking forward to getting started with the coaches and players right away.”

TRANSACTIONS

Appalachian State — Promoted Dwayne Ledford to co-offensive coordinator/running game and offensive line coach. Hired Frank Ponce as co-offensive coordinator/passing game and quarterbacks coach.

Photo Courtesy: Dewayne Ledford, ASU Athletics