

Monken Heading To West Point

Written by Staff Reports

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Army, which has lost 12 straight to its arch-rival Navy, has found its new head coach. The Cadets, who were 3-9 this past fall, have named Jeff Monken their new head coach.

Monken, who comes to West Point, N.Y., with an impressive resume, was 38-16 at Georgia Southern and helped guide the program's transition to the Football Bowl Subdivision from the Football Championship Subdivision ranks. Monken, a former Navy assistant, becomes the 37th coach to lead Army's football program.

Monken will be officially introduced Monday at a news conference. He replaces Rich Ellerson, who was fired last week after his fifth straight loss to Navy. The 60-year-old Ellerson went 20-41 at Army and couldn't snap the Black Knights' losing streak against their most important rival. Navy has won 12 straight in the series, the longest run by either team.

Army went 8-28 in Ellerson's final three seasons, but the triple option wasn't the problem. Army's offense averaged more than 300 yards rushing each of those seasons, but the rest of the team never developed. He had two years left on his contract.

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Georgia Southern, which has left the Southern Conference and will join the Sun Belt Conference next year, qualified for the NCAA playoffs in all three eligible seasons under Monken, advancing to the national semifinals each year while posting double-digit victory totals. The Eagles, who were ineligible for the SoCon title and the FCS playoffs this year, were 7-4 in 2013.

Monken was hired as Georgia Southern's coach in November 2009 after serving 20 years as an assistant -- 13 with his mentor, Johnson. Monken coached slotbacks at Georgia Southern from 1997 to 2001 before joining Johnson first at Navy and then Georgia Tech. As an assistant at Georgia Southern, Monken was part of two NCAA FCS national championship squads (1999 and 2000) and five straight playoff teams.

At Annapolis, Monken helped the Midshipmen to five straight Commander-in-Chief's trophies and five consecutive bowl appearances, including a 10-win season in 2004. At Georgia Tech, he served as slotbacks coach and special-teams coordinator for two seasons.

Photo Courtesy: Jeff Monken, SoCon Athletics