



Photo by Drew Engleke

Dennis Parker is in his second year as head coach for the Texas Lutheran Bulldogs. Parker returned to his Texas coaching roots in 2007 after coaching in Mesa, Ariz., at Mesa High School, for three seasons.

Parker was hired on Jan. 22, 2007 as the 22nd coach in school history. At the time of his hiring, Parker said, "I am humbled to be at a school that has produced Tommy Mueller and Jim Wacker as coaches and to be at a school that has produced players like Mike Washington, Phil Dunne and D.W. Rutledge. I am honored and grateful and excited to work at making this an exciting and meaningful time in the young lives of the TLU players."

Parker and the TLU Bulldogs won just two games in 2007, but the team showed progress throughout the year as it coped with the opening-game loss of senior quarterback Joel Waldon (who will be back for 2008). Even without an experienced quarterback, the offense (with Parker calling the plays as offensive coordinator) averaged 26.1 points per game and 306.8 yards of total offense per game.

In Parker's offense, sophomore (now junior) running back Anthony Smith flourished and set TLU NCAA Division III-era records for rushing yards in a season (1,066) and all-purpose yards (1,989). Smith ended 2007 as the fifth-ranked all-purpose back in the nation.

In the three years prior to TLU, Parker coached Mesa High School in Mesa, Ariz., to a 3-7 record in

2004, a 5-5 mark in 2005 and a 7-4 record in 2006. Parker guided the Jackrabbits to the state playoffs in 2006. For Mesa, the playoff appearance was its first since 2000.

Parker has collegiate coaching experience as the head coach of NCAA Division I University of North Texas. He coached at North Texas for the 1991, 1992 and 1993 seasons. Parker was also an assistant coach at Southeast Missouri State University from 1977 to 1981.

Parker won a state championship at Marshall High School in Marshall, Texas in 1990. Parker took the job at Marshall after serving as the offensive coordinator for Converse Judson on its 1983 state championship team.

While at Converse Judson, Parker coached for Texas Lutheran Hall of Famer Frank Arnold as Arnold's offensive coordinator. Another TLU Hall of Famer, Rutledge, was the defensive coordinator at Converse Judson while Parker was the Judson offensive coordinator.

Parker has had football head coaching stops in Texas at San Antonio Edison High School, Marshall High School and Cleburne High School. He has been a Texas high school assistant football coach at San Antonio Edison, San Antonio Holmes and Converse Judson. He was named the Texas High School Coach of the Year in 1988 and in 1990.

Parker has served as athletic director at Marshall High School, Cleburne High School, Keller Independent School District in Keller, Texas, and Ector County Independent School District in Odessa, Texas.

Parker and his wife, Merry, lived in Seguin for three years while Parker coached at Converse Judson. They now call Seguin home once again. The Parkers have two grown children, Kimberly and Sam.

Dennis Parker Quick Facts

Education

Idabel High School in Idabel, Okla. 1968, graduated with honors

Southeastern Oklahoma University 1972, BS in Education
Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities

Southeast Missouri University 1978, MA in Education

Coaching/Teaching Experience

1972-73 Whittier Junior High (San Antonio), Physical Education Teacher and Coach

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1973-74 Edison High School (San Antonio), Assistant Football Coach and Track and Field Coach, Physical Education Teacher

- 1974-75** Edison High School (San Antonio), Head Football Coach, Physical Education Coordinator
- 1975-77** Holmes High School (San Antonio), Assistant Football Coach, Physical Education/Health Coordinator
- 1977-81** Southeast Missouri University, Assistant Football Coach
- 1981-84** Judson High School (Converse, Texas), Assistant Football Coach, Physical Education and Health Coordinator
- 1984-90** Marshall High School (Marshall, Texas), Head Football Coach and Athletic Director
- 1991-94** University of North Texas, Head Football Coach
- 1994** Zig Ziglar Corporation, educational consultant and motivational speaker
- 1994-98** Cleburne High School, Head Football Coach and Athletic Director
- 1998-2000** Keller ISD (Keller, Texas), Athletic Director
- 2000-02** Ector Country ISD (Odessa, Texas), Athletic Director
- 2002-04** Changing Lives, Executive Director
- 2004-07** Mesa High School (Mesa, Ariz.), Head Football Coach
- 2007-Present** Texas Lutheran University, Head Football Coach

Publications

- Health Curriculum, Co-Author, Northside ISD, 1976
- Multiple Offense, AFCA, National Journal, June 1991
- Coaching To Change Lives, Co-Author, 1997
- Teaching To Change Lives, Co-Author, 1999
- Foundations of Character, 2001
- Mental Training for Athletes, 2003

Noteworthy

- Texas High School Coach of the Year (1988)
- East Texas Coach of the Year (1988)
- District Coach of the Year (1988, 1989, 1990, 1996)
- Became youngest head football coach in history of Class 5A, 24 years old, 1974
- Produced first undefeated regular football season in Marshall High School history (14-0), 1988
- Initiated mandatory drug testing for student-athletes at Cleburne High School
- Initial recipient of "Spirit of Marshall" award, given by Chamber of Commerce of Marshall, Texas
- Speaker at state football conventions in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi, Arizona, Florida, Wisconsin, Nebraska and North Dakota
- Speaker at every major football clinic in Texas
- Minor role in Mace Neufeld movie "Necessary Roughness", 1991
- Appeared in PBC documentary on character education, 1999



Coaching To Change Lives and the Teaching of Character



TLU Head Coach Dennis Parker is an accomplished author and public speaker. He has developed seven curricula on teaching character and has performed more than 100 in-services for training teachers in character education. Parker and his good friend (and former TLU All-American linebacker and state championship football coach for Converse Judson)

D.W. Rutledge are the authors of the book "Coaching To Change Lives".

Said legendary Coach Lou Holtz: "Coach Parker has commented that he has never had a player come back to him and say, 'Coach, I want to thank you for teaching me how to throw that football or make that tackle, it changed

my life.' But he has had many come back and say to him, 'Coach, remember that story you told and the values you taught me? They changed my life and made me a better person.'"

Since the Bulldogs have been with Parker, they have been exposed to the character development curriculum of Parker and Rutledge. The Bulldogs meet regularly in a classroom setting to discuss character and to discuss ways in which characters shapes everyday decisions and outcomes.

Coach Parker continues to travel around the country to speak about character development and the teaching of character.

"We teach character daily," said Parker. "Years ago I traded end of practice 'preaching' for the beginning of practice 'teaching'. I know this is why we have successful with all kinds of players in very diverse settings."





ASSISTANT COACHES



Sahr Bindi
Student Assistant, Secondary

Houston native Sahr Bindi is back for his second season as a student assistant coach for the Bulldogs. Bindi will assist with coaching in the secondary.

Bindi transferred from East Texas Baptist University to TLU for the 2006 season. Bindi became a defensive standout for the Bulldogs in 2006, earning First Team All-ASC honors as a defensive back. In that 2006 season, Bindi recorded 61 tackles, three tackles for loss and a sack in the Bulldogs' 6-4 campaign.

Bindi was an All-District selection at Cypress Springs High School.



Chris Castillo
Defensive Coordinator

Chris Castillo is the Bulldogs' new defensive coordinator. Castillo enters his seventh season in collegiate football and enters his first year as a defensive coordinator. Castillo has previously worked as the defensive line coach at Humboldt State University in Arcata, Calif. Castillo was the defensive line

coach for three seasons at Humboldt State and spent one year as the defensive line coach and special teams coordinator, also at Humboldt State.

Castillo also spent time at California Lutheran University, where for two years he was the defensive line coach.

Castillo is a 2001 graduate of Humboldt State. He received a bachelor's degree in kinesiology.

Castillo and his wife Leora have a 4-year-old daughter Carleigh. Coach Castillo is a native of Palmdale, Calif. He is the son of Nick and Denise Castillo.



Awan Diles
Secondary Coach

Awan Diles joins the TLU Football coaching staff for the 2008 season. Coach Diles is the new assistant coach for the secondary.

Diles lettered four years and was a three-year starter at safety and cornerback for Fresno State University. Diles played in two Silicon Valley Bowls, one MPC Computer Bowl and the Humanitarian Bowl for Pat Hill's Fresno State Bulldogs.

Diles earned his bachelor's degree in kinesiology from Fresno State in 2005. Diles was a graduate assistant at Fresno State for the 2006 football season. He then coached the wide receivers at Fresno City College for the 2007 season before taking the job at Texas Lutheran.

Diles has a 6-year-old son Dezmen. Coach Diles is the son of Bonita Weaver and Larry Diles of Marlin, Texas. Coach Diles's brother Zac is a linebacker for the Houston Texans.

Coach Diles is a native of Tulare, Calif. He played at Tulare Union High School and was a member of two state championship squads.

In his spare time, Diles enjoys music, football, motorcycles and movies.



Steven Fiala
Student Assistant, Defensive Line

Steven Fiala joins the Bulldogs' coaching staff as a student assistant after playing three seasons for TLU. Fiala, a defensive back, lettered three seasons and played in 21 career varsity games and recorded 23 total tackles.

Fiala, an El Campo, Texas native, is finishing his bachelor's degree in kinesiology. Fiala is the son of Allan and Debbie Fiala.



Mike Janak
Student Assistant, Tight Ends

Mike Janak moves from starting tight end to coaching tight ends for the 2008 season. Janak spent four years as a TLU tight end and started in three of those seasons. Janak finished his four-year career with 31 catches for 399 yards with three touchdowns.

Janak is the son of Patrick and Joan Janak and of Roger and Daula Upton. Mike is finishing his bachelor's degree in education with a minor in English. Janak is a native of Santa Fe, Texas and a graduate of Santa Fe High School.





Peter Lofthouse
Wide Receivers / Special Teams

Peter Lofthouse is another new member of the TLU Football coaching staff. Coach Lofthouse is the new assistant coach for the wide receivers. He also serves as the special teams coordinator.

Lofthouse is a native of Lake Forest, Calif. He attended El Toro High School and graduated from Arizona State University with a bachelor's of science in business administration.

Lofthouse spent two years at Baylor University as the offensive graduate assistant and special teams graduate assistant. Coach Lofthouse worked primarily with the wide receivers, offensive linemen and the scout teams.

Lofthouse is the son of Kent and Candy Lofthouse of Lake Forest, Calif. Coach Lofthouse enjoys traveling, wakeboarding and surfing.



Joe Matulich
Running Backs / Full Backs

Coach Joe Matulich has been coaching football (high school and college) in the state of Texas for 35 years. He has been a head coach at Smithson Valley High School and was the first head coach at San Antonio Madison.

Coach Matulich will coach the running backs, full backs and tight ends for the 2008 season. He was the wide receivers coach in the 2007 season.

Matulich is a graduate of Texas Tech University (Class of 1969).

Joe and his wife Beth have been married 38 years. The Matulichs have three children: Job (35), a teacher in Frisco, Texas; Ben (32) a teacher in Garland, Texas; and Janey (17), a recent graduate of New Braunfels High School. Janey is enrolled at Texas A&M University for the 2008-09 academic year.



Josh McNeil
Student Assistant, Offensive Line

Josh McNeil, a three-year starter for the Bulldogs on the offensive line, is now a student assistant coach with the Bulldogs. McNeil will assist Head Coach Dennis Parker as a coach for the offensive line.

McNeil started and played in 29 games for the Bulldogs in his first three seasons. He was the team's starting center. He missed one game (due to injury) in three years. McNeil was a 2007 ASC Honorable Mention selection.

McNeil is a native of Killeen Texas. He played at Killeen High School for Coach Sam Jones. He started two years and twice earned All-District honors. He was a First Team All-District selection in 2004 and a Second Team All-District choice in 2003. He also was named Second Team All-Central Texas in 2004. McNeil was the 2004 Stubblefield Award recipient.

McNeil is the son of the late Merri McNeil. Josh is an accounting major at TLU and wants to pursue a career as a certified public accountant.



James Pierce
Equipment

James Pierce has been with TLU Football for five years. He has worked as a film assistant, equipment manager and as a student assistant coach for the defensive line.

Pierce, a native of Parrish, Alab., graduated from Parrish High School and attended Walker College in Alabama.

Pierce is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He served one year in Iraq with the U.S. Army. Pierce is a staff sergeant. He is currently a member of the U.S. Army Reserves.



Bill Sweda
Director of Football Operations

Bill Sweda is the director of football operations for TLU Football. Sweda oversees many of the behind-the-scenes details and functions that are of vital importance to the football program. He is in his first year as the director of football operations. Sweda coached the Bulldog tight ends in 2007.

Sweda joined the Texas Lutheran football staff for the 2007 season after working in the Texas public school system for 35 years. Sweda made coaching stops at Somerset and Converse Judson and worked in the San Antonio Independent School District and the Northeast Independent School District. Sweda retired in 2007 from the San Antonio ISD, where he was employed as a special education coordinator.

Coach Sweda was a general football assistant at Converse Judson at the same time Coach Dennis Parker was on the Converse Judson coaching staff. Sweda and Parker worked together with the offensive line and the running backs.

Coach Sweda has been married for 39 years. He and his wife Starla have two children: Stephanie and Brian. The Swedas have four grandchildren: Tayrn, 11, Collin, 10, and Kylie, 2, and newborn grandson Dane.

Coach Sweda has a bachelor's of science degree from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and a master's degree from Trinity University. Coach Sweda met his wife at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio while they both served in the U.S. Army.

Coach Sweda is active at MacArthur Park Lutheran Church in San Antonio, where he currently serves as president of the congregation. In his spare time, Sweda enjoys model trains, golf and spoiling his grandkids.



Brian Ware
Linebackers

Brian Ware lettered four years as a fullback, linebacker, safety and special teams contributor. He appeared in 30 games in his Bulldog career. A product of Austin's Reagan High School, Ware graduated in 2008 from Texas Lutheran with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology.

Ware was the running backs coach in 2007. This year, Coach Ware will assist with the linebackers.

Ware is the son of Howard Ware and Elaine Clark of Austin.



Tim Williams
Offensive Coordinator / Quarterbacks

Tim Williams joined the TLU coaching staff in 2007 and takes on the new title of offensive coordinator for the 2008 season. Williams also enters his second year as the quarterbacks coach for the Bulldogs. Williams came to TLU from Hondo High School, where he coached football and

basketball for five years.

In the two years prior to TLU, Williams was the offensive coordinator and the head basketball coach at Hondo. In football, the Hondo Owls reached the state quarterfinals in 2005 and the state semifinals in 2006. In both the 2006 and 2007 seasons, Hondo reached the state basketball playoffs.

Williams received a bachelor of science degree in kinesiology with a minor in computer science from Sul Ross State University in 2001. He lettered four years in football and one year in baseball at Sul Ross State. Williams set school records for single-season touchdown passes and passing yards in 2000 at Sul Ross State.

Coach Williams graduated from Cleburne High School in 1997. Williams led the 1996 football team to the regional quarterfinals. In that year, he set four single-season records as quarterback. At Cleburne High School, he was named All-Area Offensive MVP and First Team All District.

Coach Williams and his wife Jessica have been married six years. The Williams are the proud parents of a one-year old girl, Kaya. The Williams are expecting their second child, due in December of 2008.