



**MEDIA RELATIONS OFFICE**  
209 Convocation Center - 1525 W. Lincoln Highway - DeKalb, IL 60115  
815-753-1706 - 815-753-9540 (fax)

For Immediate Release -- December 13, 2007

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS NAMES JERRY KILL AS HUSKIES' NEW FOOTBALL COACH**  
**2004 Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Has Won 50 Games Over Last Five Seasons**

DeKALB, Ill. – Veteran head coach Jerry Kill, who led Southern Illinois to five straight Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) playoff appearances over the last five seasons, will become the 20th football head coach in Northern Illinois University history, NIU Associate Vice President/Director of Athletics Dr. Jim Phillips announced Thursday.

Kill, the 2004 Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year, has a career winning percentage of 64.6 percent, and earned his 100th career victory this season while leading SIU to a 12-2 record and a spot in the 2007 NCAA FCS (formerly Division I-AA) Semifinals. The 46-year-old Kansas native takes over for Joe Novak, who announced his retirement Nov. 26 after 12 seasons at NIU.

"To be certain, it is a great day for Northern Illinois University and for the Huskie football program," Phillips said. "During an exhaustive search, it became very clear that Jerry Kill is a perfect fit for Northern Illinois University. Everyone we talked to spoke very highly of Coach Kill, from his peers in the coaching profession to his former players and athletic administrators. He is familiar with our program and with recruiting in the state of Illinois, and he is committed to developing his student-athletes socially, academically and athletically."

Kill comes to Northern Illinois with a 104-57 career record in 14 seasons as a collegiate head coach at Southern Illinois (2001-07), Emporia State (1999-2000) and Saginaw Valley State (1994-98). Over the last five seasons, his Saluki teams won 50 games and have been ranked in the FCS Top 20 for 64 straight weeks.

After completely rebuilding the SIU program and leading it to new heights, Kill is happy to take over a Huskie program which enjoyed unprecedented success under Novak.

"It's a great opportunity to come here to Northern Illinois and be able to be a part of the program that Coach Novak has built and to join the Huskie family. This is an exciting time for my wife and I," Kill said. "After meeting with Jim [Phillips] and President Peters and seeing their commitment to the football program, with the facilities, the academic support system and everything that has been put in place, I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to be the head coach at Northern Illinois.

"The great thing is that I get a chance to be a part of the tradition that Coach Novak has built here at NIU. He's done all the hard work of building this program and he's passing the torch on to me to carry it on. I want to make him proud and make all the alums and former players proud and carry on the strong tradition that he has built."

Kill spent seven seasons at SIU where he compiled a 55-32 record and won three straight Gateway Football Conference titles from 2004-06. He coached five first-team All-Americans and four Walter Payton Award (FCS MVP) finalists while four of his former SIU players are currently on NFL rosters. In 2003, the Salukis burst onto the national scene with a 10-2 record and their first playoff appearance since 1983 as Kill was named the Region 4 Coach of the Year by the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) as well as Gateway Conference Coach of the Year.

One year later, his 2004 team was ranked number one in the country for 10 consecutive weeks and entered the playoffs as the No. 1 national seed. Following that 10-2 campaign, he was the repeat AFCA Region 4 Coach of the Year, the Gateway Conference Coach of the Year and earned the prestigious Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year honor from the Football Writer's Association of America.

-- more --

KILL HIRED --- 2-2-2

Kill's 2005 and 2006 Southern Illinois team both finished 9-4 and advanced to the second round of the FCS playoffs; the 2006 campaign included a 35-28 victory over Indiana in Bloomington. This year, the Salukis were ranked in the Top 10 for 12 consecutive weeks and advanced to the FCS national semifinals. SIU's 12 wins were the second-most in school history and included a 34-31 victory over Northern Illinois in Huskie Stadium.

Under Kill, Southern Illinois has progressed academically as well, winning the Gateway Football Conference All-Academic Award with the highest cumulative grade point average in the league in both 2004-05 and 2005-06. In addition, the SIU team has been involved in a multitude of community service activities in the Carbondale area.

Kill also enjoyed success in his first two head coaching stops with a 38-14 mark at Saginaw Valley State in five seasons, including a pair of 9-2 campaigns in 1997 and 1998, and an 11-11 record in two years at Division II Emporia State in his home state of Kansas.

Phillips noted that Kill has won at every level of football.

"Jerry Kill has been successful at every level of college coaching," Phillips said. "Simply put, he is a winner. His record speaks for itself. More importantly, he is a quality person with a great family who will continue the tradition that Coach Novak has built here at Northern Illinois."

Kill, who played football for former Texas A&M head coach Dennis Franchione at Southwestern (Kansas) College where he was a double major in education and biology, began his coaching career under Franchione as the defensive coordinator at Pittsburg State in 1985. He also won a state championship as a Missouri high school head coach before returning to Pittsburg State as offensive coordinator in 1990, where he helped the Gorillas to the national title in 1991 and to four straight trips to the postseason.

He and his wife, Rebecca, have two daughters, Krystal and Tasha.

Kill replaces Joe Novak, who spent 12 years as the Huskies' head man and led the Huskies to two bowl games and four MAC West Division titles. Novak announced his retirement on November 26 after the Huskies completed a 2-10 season in 2007.

-- quotes and profile attached --

*For more information or to request an interview with Coach Kill, contact Donna Turner, Northern Illinois Athletics Media Relations, 815-753-9513 or 815-793-5474.*