



OHIO STATE ATHLETICS COMMUNICATIONS

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The Ohio State University Selects Urban Meyer as Head Football Coach

Two-time national championship winner returns home

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Ohio State Athletics Director Gene Smith announced today that he has named alumnus Urban Meyer head coach of the University's football program. Meyer, who has the all-time tenth-highest winning percentage among head coaches, returns to the institution from which he earned his master's degree and where he began his collegiate coaching career.

"In Urban Meyer we have found an exemplary person and remarkable coach to lead the University's football program into the future," said Ohio State President E. Gordon Gee. "As an alumnus, he understands and believes in the core academic mission of the University. As an Ohioan, he shares our common values and sense of purpose."

Gene Smith, Ohio State's director of athletics and associate vice president, said that Meyer is "known not only as one of the nation's most successful coaches, but also as a leader and mentor who cares deeply about the young men who are his student-athletes. He brings with him an understanding of the University – both the important traditions of its football program and the excellence of the institution."

Meyer has 20 years of football coaching experience, most recently serving as head coach at the University of Florida, from 2005 to 2010. Under his leadership, the Florida Gators won two BCS National Championships (2006, 2008). He has received numerous awards, including Coach of the Decade from both Sports Illustrated and The Sporting News (2009). While at the University of Florida, Meyer helped lead an effort to raise \$50 million for scholarships for first-generation college students.

"I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to return to Ohio State," said Meyer. "This University and the State of Ohio have enormous meaning to me. My duty is to ensure that Ohio State's football program reflects and enhances the academic mission of the institution. I am part of it, I believe in it, and I will live it."

Prior to becoming head coach at the University of Florida, Meyer was head coach at both the University of Utah and Bowling Green State University. During his decade as a head coach, he amassed a record of 104 wins and 23 losses, and his teams won four conference titles. Meyer was named national coach of the year three times.

Meyer's first collegiate coaching position was as a graduate assistant at Ohio State, from which he earned his master's degree in sports administration in 1988. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Cincinnati, where he played defensive back.

Meyer assumes his position effective immediately.

Luke Fickell, who has served as Ohio State's head football coach since May, will continue to serve as the current team's head coach through any possible bowl appearance. He will remain on Coach Meyer's staff.

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“I want to express my enormous gratitude to Luke Fickell,” said Gene Smith. “During the past several months, he has demonstrated true leadership and devotion to the University and his players. He will continue to be a great asset to our program.”

Urban Meyer becomes the 24th head coach in the history of Ohio State football. Born in Toledo, Ohio, and raised in Ashtabula, Ohio, Meyer held a coaching internship at St. Xavier High School in Cincinnati in 1985. The following year, he joined Coach Earle Bruce’s Ohio State staff and spent two years as a graduate assistant while pursuing his master’s degree. Meyer and his wife, Shelley, have three children: daughters Nicole and Gisela and a son, Nathan. Nicole and Gisela play collegiate volleyball at Georgia Tech and Florida Gulf Coast University, respectively. Nathan is 13 years old and in middle school.

Among Meyer’s career highlights are:

- Compiling a 65-15 record during six years as head coach at the University of Florida.
- Leading the Florida Gators to two Southeastern Conference championships and two national championships.
- Leading the University of Utah to a 22-2 record in two years.
- Taking the Utah Utes to the 2004 Fiesta Bowl as the first non-Bowl Championship Series (BCS) team to play in a BCS game.
- Being named national Coach of the Year in 2003 by the Sporting News and the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year and the Home Depot Coach of the Year in 2004.
- As head coach at Bowling Green, leading the Falcons to a 17-6 record, including a 5-1 mark versus schools from BCS conferences.
- Serving as assistant coach at Illinois State (two years), Colorado State (six years) and Notre Dame (five years).

The Ohio State University has one of the nation’s largest self-supporting athletics programs, with more than 1,000 students competing in 36 intercollegiate sports. During the last two years, Ohio State has had more student-athletes named to the Academic All-Big Ten Team than any other school. The overall grade-point average of the university’s student-athletes is just over 3.0. Last year, Ohio State finished second in the Director’s Cup, which recognizes the best overall athletics programs in the country.

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