

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Campus News Archive

Campus News, Newsletters, and Events

3-28-2011

Turnbull '99 chosen as new men's soccer coach

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news

Recommended Citation

University Relations, "Turnbull '99 chosen as new men's soccer coach" (2011). *Campus News Archive*. 744.

https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news/744

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Campus News, Newsletters, and Events at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus News Archive by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

Turnbull '99 chosen as new men's soccer coach

Summary: Turnbull brings leadership, experience, and hard work to the position.

(March 28, 2011)-Scott Turnbull '99 has seen University of Minnesota, Morris soccer from virtually every position, and now he will be seeing it from the top as the new head coach of the [Cougar men's soccer](#) team.

When hiring an assistant soccer coach who can help build a program and eventually take over as head coach, you might not think to look at the roster of the football team. But when Christian DeVries, then head coach of women's soccer at Morris, needed an assistant more than a decade ago, Turnbull, then the kicker on the Cougar football team, applied.

From that point in time, it gets really interesting.

Turnbull had one year of college left but no eligibility, so the coaching arrangement seemed to make sense for Turnbull and DeVries, who especially needed someone to work with goalkeepers. Turnbull had transferred to Morris to kick on the football team after growing up playing soccer as a goalkeeper (GK) in Brandon, Manitoba. He had only been a kicker in football for a couple years before kicking collegiately. He ended up earning All-Conference honors and even getting some interest from professional teams before applying to be a student assistant under Coach DeVries.

After two years of coaching keepers for the women's team, one of which went on to be an All-American, Turnbull returned to Canada. To obtain a visa to work in the United States, you must be making a certain amount of money to ensure you make enough to live on. Because the program was in its infancy, the budgets were tight, and Turnbull's salary didn't qualify for a visa. So he kept working in Canada, picking up coaching jobs in hockey, football, and soccer.

While coaching the kickers on a high school football team, he was asked to kick for a men's league team that needed a leg. After making a solid impression, a teammate helped Turnbull set up a tryout with the professional Canadian Football League team. It went well, but Turnbull didn't get signed. So he went back to helping out several high school teams and working different jobs.

All this time, DeVries had been trying to get Turnbull back to Morris to coach. The pay kept bumping up slightly each year, but never got to the point where he would qualify for a work visa. And just when Turnbull was ready to give up on being able to find a college coaching job, Morris decided to start a men's soccer team. Now, both the men's and women's teams would share an assistant with a salary that qualified for a visa. In 2007, Turnbull was back in Morris interviewing for the assistant coach position.

DeVries coached the new men's team, while Dan Magner coached the women. Together, they interviewed three candidates for the assistant position. It was a no brainer, as DeVries states, "Scott was our top choice. He had the GK experience, coached at UMM, and graduated from UMM."

Turnbull had a unique position. Not only did he help coach two different sets of players, he also worked under two different head coaches and two completely different ways to play and coach the game. It was a good experience for Turnbull who thinks it benefitted him greatly in the long run. “I learned a lot from both systems. You start to pick up what you like the most out of each coach, and you can use some of those things later on.” He was also asked to help each team in different ways—working on recruiting, coaching a reserve team—and had a variety of duties.

In spring 2010, DeVries was hired for a job at Spring Hill College in Alabama, leaving Turnbull as the interim coach for fall 2010. And it wasn't just DeVries that was no longer with the men's program. Turnbull had to replace the 2009 top four goal scorers and six starters overall, virtually all of the offensive production the team had enjoyed over the last several seasons.

The 2010 season results were nothing short of impressive. The men returned to the conference championship game, all the while starting younger players and freshmen across the lineup. Turnbull consistently showed the poise and tact of a veteran coach, dealing with injuries to at least three major contributors and with three new starters out of four players on the defensive line. The only returner on the back line was Greg Borchers, Westminster, Colorado, who helped captain the team as a junior during Turnbull's interim season.

The ability to change a game from the sidelines isn't something easily accomplished. It takes a seasoned coach who has studied opponents inside and out to know which strategy will work best and when. And as Borchers says, “Scott won us at least two games this year because of tactical decisions that he made.” Borchers knows that it's not easy to make it to the championship in this conference, especially after losing so many key players. “Scott had a lot to do with that, he says.”

And now Turnbull is helping to pass some of that knowledge and skill to Greg Ridout, assistant coach, who holds Turnbull's former position. Turnbull thinks there needs to be a balance between letting Ridout develop his own style and helping him learn what has made Morris soccer successful. Turnbull is the only other person to hold the dual assistant position, so he should have no problem working with Ridout.

When you watch the men's team play, you can see the kind of leadership Turnbull brings to the table. He has a constant sense of composure about him, and even more impressive is the way he got his team to work so hard. Even with many new players and a thinner bench than in recent years, fans never saw his team out worked. Then again, maybe that isn't so surprising. It would be hard not to put in the work when your head coach has worked his way from football kicker, to student assistant, to coach in waiting, to assistant coach again, and finally head coach. A decade's worth of work has paid off for Turnbull, and the result isn't too bad for Morris either. Christian DeVries, who originally hired Turnbull, says it perfectly.

“When I decided to accepted the position at Spring Hill, I knew that there was a coach in place that was ready to lead the team to new heights. Scott had been through the process of helping me build two very competitive teams, first women, then men. He saw those teams at their infancy and helped bring them to the top of the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference. He knew the competition, the travel plans, the recruiting areas we target, UMM and what it has to offer, and he knew Morris. He was natural fit, and he will continue to do great thing for Cougar soccer.”

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.