

kansas football coach history

Kansas football coach history is a tale of highs and lows, filled with moments of brilliance and struggles for consistency. The University of Kansas, known for its storied basketball program, has also had a rich but tumultuous history in college football. The program has seen numerous coaches over the decades, each leaving their mark in different ways. This article will delve into the history of Kansas football coaches, highlighting significant eras, notable figures, and the evolution of the football program.

Early Years and Establishment

The Kansas football program began in the late 19th century, officially starting in 1890. The first head coach was J.A. "Mutt" McGowan, who led the team for its inaugural season.

Foundational Coaches (1890-1920)

1. J.A. McGowan (1890) - The first head coach, McGowan set the foundation for future teams.
2. John B. McLendon (1891-1892) - Led the team to their first victory and helped establish a competitive spirit.
3. W. H. "Bill" Hargiss (1910-1912) - Under his leadership, Kansas began to build a more structured football program.

These early coaches laid the groundwork for what would become a significant part of college athletics in Kansas. However, it wasn't until the 1920s that the program began to gain traction.

The Rise to Recognition

Coach Glen Mason Era (1988-1996)

One of the most significant figures in Kansas football history is Glen Mason. Taking the helm in 1988, Mason revitalized the program and brought much-needed attention to Kansas football.

- Highlights of Mason's Tenure:
- 1995 Aloha Bowl: Mason led the Jayhawks to their first bowl game since 1981.
- 1996 Big 12 Formation: Mason was instrumental in the transition to the Big

12 Conference, which provided a higher level of competition and exposure.

Mason's recruiting success and ability to develop players set the stage for future successes, and he remains one of the most respected figures in Kansas football history.

Coach Mark Mangino Era (2002-2009)

Mark Mangino's tenure marked a significant turning point for the Kansas football program. He is best known for leading the team to its most successful season in 2007.

- Highlights of Mangino's Tenure:
- 2007 Orange Bowl Victory: The Jayhawks finished the season with a record of 12-1, defeating Virginia Tech in the Orange Bowl, marking the pinnacle of Kansas football.
- Big 12 North Division Title: Mangino led the team to its first division title in the Big 12 era.
- National Recognition: The team climbed to as high as No. 2 in national rankings during the 2007 season.

Despite his success, Mangino's tenure ended controversially in 2009 due to allegations of player mistreatment. His departure left a void that the program struggled to fill.

Challenges and Changes

After Mangino's departure, Kansas football saw a series of coaching changes that resulted in inconsistency and instability.

Coaching Carousel (2010-2017)

1. Turner Gill (2010-2011) - Gill, a former quarterback at Nebraska, struggled to replicate the success of his predecessors, leading to a record of 5-19 in two seasons.
2. Charlie Weis (2012-2014) - Known for his time at Notre Dame, Weis was unable to harness the talent at Kansas, finishing with a 6-22 record.
3. David Beaty (2015-2018) - Beaty's tenure was marked by rebuilding efforts but ended with a dismal 6-42 record.

This period was characterized by a lack of stability and an inability to establish a coherent program identity, leading to a significant decline in competitiveness.

Recent Developments and Future Prospects

In 2018, the Kansas football program hired Les Miles, a former national champion coach at LSU, offering hope for a resurgence.

Les Miles Era (2019-2021)

Miles brought experience and a national reputation to the program.

- Highlights of Miles' Tenure:
- Recruiting Boost: His presence helped improve recruiting efforts significantly.
- Cultural Shift: Miles aimed to instill a winning culture and discipline within the team.

Despite the enthusiasm surrounding his hiring, the results on the field were mixed, and he was eventually let go after the 2021 season.

Current Era and Lance Leipold (2021-Present)

In 2021, Kansas hired Lance Leipold, a coach with a successful track record at Buffalo. Leipold has focused on rebuilding the program with a strong emphasis on player development and culture.

- Early Achievements:
- Improvement in Performance: Under Leipold, the Jayhawks have shown signs of progress, competing more effectively in the Big 12.
- Bowl Game Appearances: Leipold's goal is to return Kansas to bowl contention, a significant milestone for a program that has struggled for over a decade.

The future looks promising as Leipold continues to recruit and develop talent, aiming to restore Kansas football's former glory.

Conclusion

The history of Kansas football coaches reflects the challenges and triumphs of a program searching for stability and success. From the early foundational years to the peaks of the Glen Mason and Mark Mangino eras, and through the struggles of subsequent coaches, the journey has been a rollercoaster ride. With Lance Leipold at the helm, there is renewed hope and potential for Kansas football to reclaim its place in the competitive landscape of college football. The legacy of past coaches serves as both a reminder of what was achieved and a challenge for future leaders to build upon. As the program

continues to evolve, fans and alumni remain hopeful for a brighter future in Kansas football.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is the most successful Kansas football coach in terms of wins?

The most successful Kansas football coach in terms of wins is Bill Self, who led the Jayhawks to multiple bowl games and a high winning percentage during his tenure.

What notable achievements did Glen Mason accomplish during his time as head coach?

Glen Mason served as head coach from 1988 to 1996 and is known for leading the Jayhawks to a bowl game in 1992 and achieving a 10-win season in 1995.

Which Kansas football coach had a significant impact on the program's recruiting?

Mark Mangino, who coached from 2002 to 2009, had a significant impact on the program's recruiting, culminating in a historic 2007 season that included an Orange Bowl victory.

What was the outcome of the 2007 season under coach Mark Mangino?

Under coach Mark Mangino, the 2007 season resulted in an 12-1 record, the Big 12 Conference title, and a victory in the Orange Bowl.

Who succeeded Charlie Weis as the head coach of Kansas football?

David Beaty succeeded Charlie Weis as the head coach of Kansas football, serving from 2015 to 2018.

What challenges have Kansas football coaches historically faced?

Kansas football coaches have historically faced challenges such as limited resources, recruiting difficulties, and high expectations from fans while competing in a tough Big 12 Conference.

Has Kansas football ever had a coach who won a national championship?

No, Kansas football has never had a coach who won a national championship, although they have had successful seasons and bowl appearances.

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