

Sports

Fogler brings winning ways to USC

By NANCY SALOMONSKY
Sports Editor

The search is over... finally. USC Athletic Director Mike McGee announced Saturday afternoon to the crowd of fans and reporters at the Carolina Coliseum "the head coach of the University of South Carolina basketball program, Eddie Fogler.

"Earlier this year, the university made a commitment to our basketball team to bring in a great coach to lead our program to the championship goals we aspire to achieve," McGee said. "With Coach Fogler, that commitment has been met."

Coach Fogler was the 1993 consensus National Coach of the Year and comes to USC after four successful years at Vanderbilt. The Commodores, under Coach Fogler, capped off the 1993 season with the Southeastern Conference regular season championship and a NCAA Sweet 16 appearance.

"Eddie Fogler is a proven winner. He has never been a part of a losing season," McGee said.

Fogler started his basketball career as a player and as an assistant coach at the University of North Carolina under Dean Smith. After leaving UNC, he went to Wichita State, where his overall record was 61-32. Fogler left Vanderbilt with a record of 81-48.

In his seven years of head coaching, Fogler has advanced to the NCAAs four times and the NIT three times. The New York City native has been a part of six Final Four teams (twice as a player and four times as an assistant coach),

including the 1982 Tar Heel team that captured the National Championship with a victory over Georgetown.

Fogler said he is looking forward to rebuilding the USC program.

"I look forward to jumping into this full blast with my family and coaches," Fogler said.

The assistant coaches include Neil Dougherty, Jeff Lebo and Rick Callahan.

"I am looking forward to coaching Emmett Hall. I think he is a great player," Fogler said. "I am also looking forward to working with guys like Jamie Watson and Carey Rich. It is going to take some time. It takes more than three or four qualities to win at this level."

Fogler plans to start recruiting right away.

"Don't call my office on Wednesday," Fogler said. "I'll be out recruiting for the University of South Carolina."

"We are the University of South Carolina, and we need to go into every high school and house and get the top players in this state," Fogler said.

Fogler made little to no reference to the Bobby Cremins fiasco, except for saying "he was the logical choice for this university (as first choice)." Jokingly, he said he almost brought a permission slip from his wife allowing him to accept the job, which brought applause and laughter from the crowd of Gamecock fans.

"I am excited about the move, and I look forward to bringing this

program back to the national level," Fogler said. "It will take a lot of hard work."

Fogler's contract will be for five years with an annual salary of \$105,000 from the athletic department funds and provides for annual extensions. Fogler has the opportunity to earn outside income through television, radio and endorsements.

Throughout the press conference, Fogler made several references to "student-athletes."

"I don't want to be around anyone who won't work hard, go to class and get a degree," Fogler said.

The new coach has not met with the Carolina players yet, but they look forward to playing for him.

"My emotional level has gone from high to low to high again," Carey Rich said. "I am proud to have the National Coach of the Year on my side."

Both Fogler and Rich said the team needs more student support. They hope to have the Coliseum packed for all home games.

"Come out and support us," Rich said. "We travel all across the country, and the fans at other schools ride us the whole time," Rich said. "We want to make the Carolina Coliseum a place that other teams dread coming to."

Fogler will come to Columbia with his wife Robin, daughter Emma, 4, and son Benjamin, born this past January.

"I am proud to be a Gamecock," Fogler said. "This is a great opportunity and a great school. I am happy to be here."



Eddie Fogler, National Coach of the Year, became the head coach of the USC basketball program Saturday. Fogler, here with president John Palms, addressed a crowd of fans and reporters at the Carolina Coliseum.

Patrick Villegas/The Gamecock

Fogler's Crystals

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- Associated Press
- United Press International
- CBS-TV Chevrolet Coach of the Year
- U.S. Basketball Writers Association
- Scripps-Howard
- Sports Illustrated
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