Weis here to win

By HEATHER VAN HOEGARDEN
News Writer

When he was unemployed 15 years ago, a job the Notre Dame head football coach was the farthest thing from his mind. But Sunday, things came full circle for Charlie Weis, as he was named the head football coach at his alma mater, signing a six-year deal.

"This is obviously a high-profile, big-time job, but it's one that I, a long, long time ago, thought wouldn't that be something if you could ever be the head coach at Notre Dame."

Weis, a 1978 Notre Dame graduate who didn't play football for the Irish, said at Monday's press conference. "You know when we all grow up we have aspirations."

Weis, was without a job in 1994 after South Carolina coach Joe Morrison died, and as a result, he lost his assistant job. He then became a high school head coach for a year before coaching in the NFL. The last five years, Weis has been the offensive coordinator of the New England Patriots, winning two Super Bowl titles.

"At the University of Notre Dame, the success in our football program consists of three things: acting with integrity, giving our students a superb education and excelling on the field," University President-elect Father John Jenkins said. "Meeting all of these goals is a tremendous challenge. But I believe we have found a person in Charlie Weis who can lead us to such multifaceted success."

Weis said he didn't come to Notre Dame to lose football games. He expects nothing less than winning football games in a program that hasn't posted back-to-back winning seasons since 1997 and 1998 under Bob Davie.

"You are what you are folks, right now you're a 6-5 football team," Weis said. "And guess what—that's just not good enough. That's not good enough for you, and it's certainly not going to be good enough for me."

"So if you think they hired me to go .500, you've got the wrong guy."

Weis especially emphasized the new attitude he wants to bring to Notre Dame. He knows the Irish play a tough schedule, playing four of the first five games on road next season, including Michigan, Michigan State and Pittsburgh. But despite claims that the schedule is too tough, Weis wants the team to play with arrogance, a sense that the farthest thing from his mind was winning football games.

"My job here is to raise [the] expectations."

Monk clarifies remarks, supports Weis

By MATT LOZAR
News Writer

After expressing public embarrassment last week about the decision to fire Tyrone Willingham, University President Father Edward Malloy explained his attention-grabbing remarks Monday and offered his support for Charlie Weis.

"I was not a definitive voice and I was not the one who initiated the action. The impression had been made that I was, and I was simply trying to clarify the record that I felt I was not a definitive voice and I was not the one who initiated the action," Malloy said. "But people of goodwill can disagree about such matters, and I don't want that to stand in the way of good relationship with coach Weis."

During the course of the football season, Malloy met with Irish athletic director Kevin White on multiple occasions to discuss the direction of the program. Malloy felt the University had chosen Willingham as its coach and barring tragic events, he would have a long-term job.

Malloy made his comments at the panel titled "Role of the President or Chanceller in Overseeing Intercollegiate Athletics" at the Sports Business Journal's Intercollegiate Athletics Forum. He was on the panel along with presidents from Ohio State and Vanderbilt and Myles Brand, president of the NCAA.

In June 2001, the Knight Commission published A Call to Action: Reconnecting College Sports and Higher Education. Monday, Malloy cited one of the report's principles that states the responsibility and authority for the administration of the athletics department are vested in the president. This includes issues related to basic policies, personnel and finances.

"I was in a long-established commitment for a conference in New York," Malloy said. "The other people that were on it were all people I know. The things we talked about were all serious issues and I knew I was probably going to be asked and was expecting that. I wanted to clarify my position, which I felt I did, and I have nothing else to say about that."

Weis outlined extensive search

By MATT LOZAR
News Writer

Notre Dame athletic director Kevin White claims he doesn't know any of the details about the nationwide media speculation surrounding the Irish coaching search.

He didn't ready any of the articles.

"I've had the blinders on. I haven't read any of your articles. I really haven't. I'm sure some of them were terrible and some weren't very good. I can't speak to that," White said. "What I can tell you is my focus has been on hiring the next football coach and really hard not to be defocused by everything that's going on."

Over the 10-day search, White said Monday there were an unquantifiable number of conversations with potential prospects in the college and NFL worlds. The University utilized one outside search consultant, Gene Corrigan, a former Notre Dame athletic director and former commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference.

White said five candidates were interviewed formally for the head coach position left vacant by the Nov. 30 firing of Tyrone Willingham.

Two candidates had conversations with University representatives about specific compensation details.

On Friday, a number of different groups talked by phone with coach Charlie Weis before the offer was made that evening.

The student-athlete transition team of Victor Alumamiri, Anthony Faussor, Brady Quinn, Brandon Hoyte, Justin Turk and Ryan Harris talked with ...
Students voice optimism about Weis

By CLAIRE HEININGER

If first impressions are any indication, new head football coach Charlie Weis and the Notre Dame student body will make a strong match.

Whether or not they favored the firing of former coach Tyrone Willingham, most students were impressed by Monday afternoon’s discussion about the football program’s chance to leave behind the controversy of the past two weeks and move forward under its new man.

“Weis seems like he’s a football guy — he’s going to put a system in place, relate to the players,” sophomore Adam Higgins said. “I don’t think any one disliked him as a man, but he wasn’t getting it done as a football coach. I think [Weis will].”

Senior Nick Molter agreed that Weis was an improvement on his predecessor — but should be held to an identical standard of performance.

“I think he’s been working with one of the most successful programs in the country, so hopefully he can bring that to Notre Dame,” Molter said. “[Bill] Belichick is going to take wins on the football field ... if Charlie Weis can’t perform, he should be fired, and we should bring someone else in.

“It is absolutely a realistic possibility — the West has a lot to offer. Weis is Irish and the Irish are returning to Irish country — an Irish tradition, Irish players. And while he did have to contend with the notion that he was Notre Dame’s second choice — after Utah’s Urban Meyer, who signed with the Florida Gators last week — students expressed confidence in the selection of the new coach.

“We started off this year with huge expectations,” Molter said. “We started out by being fired at. Not that we don’t think they can turn this around or get it up on the field. But we’ve been going through a lot of controversy which is good for the program, not just for the team. It was a good move for people.”

Weis now has to balance his time between Notre Dame and New England. The Patriots’ season could last until the Super Bowl on Feb. 6. He would not disclose specific dates for kid split times, but he said he is confident in his ability to recruit, even while holding both jobs.

“[New England] is the same level of respect. They put out a lot of wins, he’s not a second choice ... he’s a great second choice ... he’s a real good choice again ... after the 2001 season,” Weis said.

“[Weis] seems like he’s a football guy — he’s going to put a system in place, relate to the players,” senior Adam Higgins said. “He seems to be a guy who’s going to get it done as a football coach. I think [Weis will].”

Happy Holidays.
The Irish hope to finish the season on a high note by ending the school's six-bowl game losing streak.
Oregon State quarterback Jonathan Smith avoids Notre Dame's Tony Driver, No. 25, and Jason Beckstrom, No. 27, during the Beavers' 41-9 victory over the Irish in the 2001 Fiesta Bowl.

Joe Hettier
Sports Writer
THE OBERSTAR
Tuesday, December 14, 2004

This game still matters a lot

The Insight Bowl is a chance for the Irish to finish strong

By MATT LOZAR
Sports Writer

It's not about revenge, but the details are too coincidental to dismiss as mere happenstance.

"I don't know about revenge. It's hard to take out revenge on guys you haven't seen in four years," Irish fifth-year senior Kyle Budinscak said. "I think I definitely didn't want to have the taste in my mouth finishing my career that I had when I first got here. It's funny how things work."

"It's the same city, the same timing, against the same team. I don't know exactly what that means, but I would hate to end my career the way it kind of did.

While revenge isn't on the forefront of motivational tools for Dec. 28's Insight Bowl game against Oregon State, four years after the Beavers destroyed the Irish 41-9 in the 2001 Fiesta Bowl, the memories of that "Fiasco Bowl" aren't forgotten.

The score was only 12-3 at halftime, but in the third quarter, Oregon State scored 29 unanswered points en route to amassing 446 total yards of offense compared to Notre Dame's 155.

The following freshman year, I didn't participate. But it basically got our butts kicked. It's not how you want to go out. Irish fifth-year defensive lineman Greg Pauly said. "It's not like we're looking for payback. This is a big game for us, and we're going to be there and playing like that."

Over the past five years, the Irish have not had the best finishes to their seasons. In 1999 they lost their last four games. In 2001, they were the Fiesta Bowl loss. In 2003, Notre Dame lost their last game but Bob Davie fired the next day.

During the Williamsburg era, in 2002, the Irish were blown out by 26-0 by Tennessee and Arkansas State and in 2003, a 5-6 Sun Belt team embarrassed the Irish 38-12.

This game gives the Irish another opportunity to avoid ending their season with a bad loss.

"I think this team is full of competitors, and that's who we are. That's who we're going to be doing, whether we're playing in the national championship game or the Insight Bowl," Irish offensive lineman Dan Stefanski said.

"Right now, I think you have to play for pride. ... There's a lot to show about this team. It sets up next year.

One key thing in this game is going to be the Irish secondary against the Oregon State passing game.

The Beavers rank eighth in the country in passing per game, averaging 384.4 yards per game.

The Irish have allowed a total of 10 touchdowns passes in the past two games.

"Stay the same, the same timing, against the same team. I don't know exactly what that means. I would hate to end my career the way it kind of did began."

Kyle Budinscak
Irish defensive lineman

Irish hope to avoid repeat of 2001 Fiesta Bowl

Notre Dame lost 41-9 to Beavers in first game but Bob Davie fired the next day, and turned down bowl bid invitations. Things certainly have changed since then.

But with Weis stepping in, the program can begin to regain some prominence. While a win in the Insight Bowl would be. In theory, mean, groundbreaking, it could be the start of a slow, gradual improvement of the Irish football program.

Does this game even matter?

Yes, it does.

The opinions expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

Contact Joe Hettier at jhettier@nd.edu

Mike Riley
Oregon State head coach

"We're playing a team that's pretty hungry. It's going to be a challenge. Our guys are ready to play them."

Kent Baer
Interim head coach

"Anytime you go to a bowl game you're excited. We get to go down there and show the country what kind of team we have."

Justin Tuck
Irish defensive end

"They've got great skill position guys. Four years ago it was the same case. They're real strong up front so it will be a challenge."

Kyle Budinscak
Irish defensive lineman

"For those of us who have followed football for a while, Notre Dame has a special place in college football."

Contact Matt Lozar at mlozar@nd.edu
Stills a lot to play for

Irish hope to win Insight Bowl for Willingham, for the University and for themselves

By HEATHER VAN HOEGARDEN
Sports Editor

For some, it's a chance to get a win. For others, it is the last time they will put on a Notre Dame uniform. But for most, it's an important football game. As a result, Notre Dame has ended its year in style. The Irish kicked against Oregon State in the 2001 Fiesta Bowl, and I remember them calling it "the Fiasco Bowl. We are trying not to let that happen again."

Mike Godsby
Irish linebacker

"We got our butts kicked [against Oregon State in the 2001 Fiesta Bowl, and I remember them calling it "the Fiasco Bowl. We are trying not to let that happen again."

It's ironic for the fifth-year guys that our first bowl game as freshmen is going to be our last bowl game playing the same team. It's an last chance to get a shot. I never got to beat Boston College, so this is one of those types of deals. It's your last opportunity.

Something to build on

Last year, their season ended with a 38-12 loss to Syracuse. The year before it ended with a 28-6 loss to North Carolina State in the Gator Bowl. In fact, Notre Dame has not won its last game since 2001, when Bob Davie's team beat Purdue 24-18, the last game Davie coached at Notre Dame.

The Insight Bowl is an opportunity for this team to end a roller coaster season on a positive note, following a 41-28 loss to Navy and a third straight 31-point loss to the Trojans. "USC didn't finish on a good note, and this is just one more chance to get everything going in the right direction and just make the spring and summer that much more exciting," Irish kicker D.J. Fitzpatrick said.

Irish offensive lineman Dan Stevenson said getting a win to end the year is especially important.

"I don't want to spend the entire offseason thinking about the last game," Stevenson said. "Whatever happens in the last game you keep that in the back of your mind. So it's huge for us to go out there and get a big win.

Stevenson said he thinks this Irish team still has something to prove to the rest of the college football world after a season in which the Irish knocked off top-10 teams (Michigan and Tennessee), but also lost two tough home games (Boston College and Pittsburgh).

"It's a huge game, we want to go out there and show that we have a great team, great talent," he said. "I think everybody's writing us off, but we know better than that. We know what we have here, and its time for us to step up and show it."

Still a football game

Despite all the media attention Notre Dame and its football program has received in the weeks following the firing of Willingham, Irish players are excited to get back on the field to play the game they love.

"We're excited," Tuck said. "We get to go to a great bowl game.

Budinksy, another fifth-year senior, said that for the seniors, it's a chance to show the world one last time what they can do.

"We haven't had enough reasons to play this season," Budinksy said. "This is our last game, and we want to make sure we do everything we can to get a win."

Still a football game

"It's very exciting," Walker said. "Seeing all the bowl games on TV last year, that was something I really wanted to do. I'm excited, I'm thrilled.

And while the seniors play their last game for Notre Dame, other Irish players will be playing their first bowl game. Walker, a true freshman, is excited for the opportunity to play in a bowl.

"It's very exciting," Walker said. "I think we have a great team and we want to go out there and show people that we have a great team. We want to go out on the right note."

And while the seniors play their last game for Notre Dame, other Irish players will be playing their first bowl game. Walker, a true freshman, is excited for the opportunity to play in a bowl.

"It's very exciting," Walker said. "Seeing all the bowl games on TV last year, that was something I really wanted to do. I'm excited, I'm thrilled.

I'm pumped-up, ready to go. I just can't wait to get to Arizona where it's warm."

Contact Heather Van Hoegarden at hvanhoeg@nd.edu

The Irish sack Stanford quarterback Trent Edwards in a game earlier this season. Against Oregon State's potent passing attack, the Notre Dame defense will have to get pressure on the quarterback.

The last year that Notre Dame won a bowl game; the victory was a 24-21 victory over Texas A&M in the Cotton Bowl.

1994

6 Number of bowl games Notre Dame has lost since that Cotton Bowl victory.

41 Number of points Notre Dame allowed against Oregon State in the teams' last matchup — the 2001 Fiesta Bowl, which the Irish lost 41-49.

114 Oregon State's rank, out of 117 Division I football teams, in passing defense (374.3 yards per game).

75.3 Oregon State's national rank in passing offense (384.4 yards per game).

10 Number of rushing yards Oregon State averages per game, second worst in the nation behind Iowa.

94.4 Number of rushing yards the Notre Dame defense gives up per game.

by the numbers

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94.4 Number of rushing yards the Notre Dame defense gives up per game.

The Notre Dame defensive line gets a push against the Michigan offensive line earlier this season. The Irish have held their opponents to low rush totals all season, and hope to do the same to Oregon State.
Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Record: 6-5
AP: NR
Coaches: NR

Kent Baer
Interim coach at Notre Dame
Career record: 0-0
at Notre Dame: 0-0
against Oregon State: 0-0

Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Roster

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The Observer ♦ IRISH INSIDER

Tuesday, December 14, 2004

Notre Dame 17
OREGON STATE 21

Coaching

Quinn has been up and down during the regular season, but has still had the best year of his career so far after throwing for 2,372 yards and 15 touchdowns. He has also shown flashes of being able to bring the ball down and run if the defense allows it.

Riley has a losing record in two stints at Oregon State, and was not successful in the NFL as coach of the San Diego Chargers from 1999-2001. His team has played hard this season against ranked teams.

While Riley has never done much to prove his worth as a head coach, he still has a game of experience in both the NFL and at Oregon State. Right now, he will be coaching his first bowl game.

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While Riley has never done much to prove his worth as a head coach, he still has a game of experience in both the NFL and at Oregon State. Right now, he will be coaching his first bowl game.

Bray will lead the team in its first, and last, game as coach of the Irish. As defensive coordinator during the regular season, under the recently-fired Willingham, Bray's defense was strong against the run but poor against the pass.

The Irish have done well this season with a two-headed attack in senior Ryan Grant and freshman Darius Walker. The two backs were about all the offense the Irish could muster against USC, and Oregon State's run defense is not as good as USC's.

The Bears have done okay against the run, but they have also played a schedule full of pass-first Pac-10 teams. Oregon State has allowed an average of 122.6 yards per game this season and just nine rushing touchdowns.

The Bears have done okay against the run, but they have also played a schedule full of pass-first Pac-10 teams. Oregon State has allowed an average of 122.6 yards per game this season and just nine rushing touchdowns.

The Irish might have difficulty against the Beavers if Oregon State decides to run. The Irish have faced some poor defenses and thrown interceptions. The Oregon State defense has been playing against a schedule that has seldom been matched with better passing teams than Notre Dame.

Oregon State

Analysis

A lot of people would compare winning this game to Boston College and Pittsburgh — games the Irish shouldn't lose because of the leadership of their senior class. But that leadership can't overcome Notre Dame's inability to stop Oregon State's aerial attack. It won't be the Fiesta Bowl, but it won't be a happy ending.

The Irish didn't lose to Michigan and Tennessee. So, I'll go with Oregon State in hopes I'm wrong yet again. Notre Dame needs to shut down the Beavers' outstanding passing attack, while the Irish offense needs to rush the ball well against a vulnerable OSU defense.

Notre Dame 21
OREGON STATE 31

Quinn has been up and down during the regular season, but has still had the best year of his career so far after throwing for 2,372 yards and 15 touchdowns. He has also shown flashes of being able to bring the ball down and run if the defense allows it.

Riley has a losing record in two stints at Oregon State, and was not successful in the NFL as coach of the San Diego Chargers from 1999-2001. His team has played hard this season against ranked teams.

While Riley has never done much to prove his worth as a head coach, he still has a game of experience in both the NFL and at Oregon State. Right now, he will be coaching his first bowl game.

What do I know? Probably not much. I picked the Irish to beat BYU, Purdue, BC, and Pitt, and lose to Michigan and Tennessee. So, I'll go with Oregon State in hopes I'm wrong yet again. Notre Dame needs to shut down the Beavers' outstanding passing attack, while the Irish offense needs to rush the ball well against a vulnerable OSU defense.
OREGON STATE OFFENSE

The Oregon State offense in 2004 had several key players, including running back DeAngelo Williams, who rushed for over 1,000 yards. The offense was led by quarterback Nick Foles and featured a strong offensive line. The Beavers' defense was also strong, particularly against the run. The Beavers' 2004 schedule included games against Oregon, Stanford, and UCLA, among others.

OREGON STATE 2004 Schedule

- Sept. 4 at LSU - L
- Sept. 10 at Boise State - L
- Sept. 18 at Oregon - W
- Sept. 25 at Arizona State - L
- Oct. 2 at California - L
- Oct. 16 at Washington - W
- Oct. 23 at Arizona - W
- Nov. 6 at USC - L
- Nov. 13 vs. Stanford - W
- Nov. 20 vs. Oregon - W

OREGON STATE BEAVERS

Oregon State has one of the best rushing teams in the nation, averaging over 300 yards per game. The offense is led by quarterback Nick Foles and features a strong running back in DeAngelo Williams. The defense is ranked No. 9 in the nation, allowing just 100 yards per game. The Beavers are optimistic about next season, but they need to improve their passing offense to win some close games.

Oregen State has gone from one of the best rushing teams in the nation with Stephen Jackson in 2003, to the second-worst in the nation in 2004 at just 75.3 yards per game. Its passing game more than makes up for the lack of a rushing game.

The Beavers are anxious to show their 2005 record is misleading, and hope to take advantage of the Irish while they're down. With the game in Arizona, Oregon State might have a chance for a home-field advantage, but then again there are Irish fans everywhere.

Notre Dame hasn't won a bowl game since 1994, and lost its last two games during the regular season. They'd love to break both those streaks at the Insight Bowl, and help Baer go out a winner — no doubt with the team playing in honor of Willingham.

The Irish really want to win this game, but this looks like a bit of a mismatch with one of the best passing offenses in the country against a very weak secondary that is one of the worst in the nation. The Irish defense will have a tough time, but they have a chance to play well against one of the best offenses in the nation.

NOTRE DAME OFFENSE

Notre Dame's rushing defense is ranked No. 9 in the nation, allowing just 94.4 yards per game. The Irish have held opponents under 100 yards eight times this season, but only won four of those games. The Irish secondary has been one of the worst in the country, allowing five touchdowns in each of Notre Dame's last two games in the regular season. The team's average of 274.3 yards allowed through the air is the fourth-worst in the nation.

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Pitpatrick is 11-for-15 in field goals this year, and has been better than average on his punts — averaging 42.6 yards per kick. The Irish kick return team has been woeful, allowing two touchdowns and 20.5 yards average per return.

The Beavers' passing attack is going to be tough for Notre Dame to stop. The Beavers have allowed one punt return for a touchdown.

Oregon State's passing attack will be too much for Notre Dame as all team's attacks have been this season. The Beavers will stop the Irish offense enough to get the win through the air. The Irish are optimistic about next season, but it doesn't start here.
Sizing up the Irish and Beavers

**AVERAGE PER GAME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTRE DAME'S OFFENSE</th>
<th>OREGON STATE'S DEFENSE</th>
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<tr>
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</table>

Oregon State yards penalized: 45.9

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**KEY MATCHUP**

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**Mattison to join Meyer's UF staff after bowl**

Current Irish defensive line coach will be Gators' co-defensive coordinator

By MATT LOZAR

Irish defensive line coach Greg Mattison simply couldn't take the notion of leaving Notre Dame after 12 years without a fight.

Mattison will become co-defensive coordinator and the defensive line coach at the University of Florida after he left Notre Dame in the Insight Bowl Dec. 28.

"I'm really excited about it. I'm excited about [Meyer]," Mattison said Friday. "We've always really respected each other. I think the world of him and the job he's done and I'm excited about being there."

Mattison was the defensive coordinator for all six years of former Irish coach Bob Davie's tenure. When Tyrone Willingham came to South Bend in 2002, Mattison was the lone holdover from Davie's staff and has been the defensive line coach for the past three seasons.

"When you're a guy that's kept, it's hard to go pick up the pieces," Mattison said. "Recruiting is hard enough, but when you have to go in after something like this happened, the first thing you have to get the young man's confidence and trust. Then you have to recruit him. I said I don't know if I want to go through that whole thing again.

Mattison is known as one of Notre Dame's top recruiters over the past eight years. The challenge of recruiting at Notre Dame is the lack of a local talent base. While the allure of playing for the Irish is an advantage, the countrywide search is a hindrance.

At Florida, that won't be the case.

"For the past eight years, I've been on a plane it seems like every other day flying all over the country," Mattison said. "How are you going to like getting in your car, driving to see a kid at night and then driving home?"

Then I said, "Well I haven't done that in about a year, and that will be kind of fun."

Mattison was in consideration for the Western Michigan head-coaching job, but pulled his name from contention when he couldn't commit five years to running the show there.

"I wasn't going to take a job and have everybody commit to you and you commit to them and something comes up like a Florida or something like that and have to tell these guys I'm going to take this job," Mattison said. "I don't believe in that."

After coaching at the University of Michigan for five years, the last two as defensive coordinator, Mattison came to South Bend and has seen a number of defensive linemen make it to the National Football League, including Lance Legrew, Anthony Weaver, Derrick Campbell and Cedric Hilliard. Current senior defensive end Justin Turk is project as a high draft pick when he decides to go to the NFL.

Great players, seeing his daughter graduate in 2003 and his love for the University will be a plus. Mattison leaves with nothing but good things to say about Notre Dame.

"Notre Dame is a special place, it's as good of a place as it gets and I'm still excited about the day I left Michigan to come here."

That's one of the best decisions I ever made just because I had the opportunity to spend eight years at this great institution," Mattison said. "They are going to be great here. The coach that comes in here, I really think has some great talent. The defense should be back the way it was, and the offense has everybody back."

"Notre Dame will get past this bump. I don't think there's a question about that."

Contact Matt Lozar at mlozar@nd.edu
By MATT LOZAR
Sports Writer

The way Irish interim head coach Kent Baer explained the Oregon State situation showed how difficult a decision it was.

Baer’s parents live five minutes from the campus. His son, granddaughter and four sisters live there as well. He played college football for the Aggies and coached there for nine years.

But for Baer to take a head coaching position, it had to be about more than personal connections.

“After looking at the situation, my emotional heart and my personal heart was in it because that’s where I’m from,” Baer said. “But my professional heart just didn’t seem like the right thing for me to do right now. I’d like to be a head coach someday. I want to make sure it’s the right situation. I don’t want to be a head coach just to be a head coach. So, again, it was just a gut feeling.”

Baer wasn’t satisfied when the school couldn’t commit to future plans concerning upgrades to the locker room, meeting rooms and weight room.

When the school asked Baer if we would accept the job if it was offered, he said no.

Baer met with Utah State in Arizona the second time after meeting them in Los Angeles on the first go-around.

Utah State announced Bronco Guy as its new head coach Friday.

**Beavers a streaking team**

After a 1-4 start, the Beavers have won five of their last six games to become bowl-eligible after defeating Oregon 30-21 on Nov. 29 in the annual "Civil War" game between the two teams.

The hot finish to the season reminds Baer of the 1996 Stanford team that won its final four regular season games before defeating Michigan State 26-20 in the Sun Bowl.

“They’ve won four out of the last five or five out of the last six. So, we might be playing one of the hottest teams in the country. We’re playing a team that’s pretty hungry,” Baer said. “They’re really a talented football team and we’re going to have our hands full. It’s going to be a challenge. Our guys are excited to play them.”

The impressive statistic about Oregon State’s five losses — LSU, Boise State, Arizona State, California and USC — is that all came against teams currently ranked in the Associated Press top 25 and all five are playing in bowl games.

**Parish continues to practice at cornerback**

After making his starting debut at cornerback against Southern California Nov. 27, Freddie Parish will continue to see time at the cornerback position in bowl practice as well as get repetitions at his customary safety position.

“Freddie did an excellent job for us that day. It’s really just a tough situation to get him in for him all at once. I thought for the most part, he did a great job. I know they give us some looks, especially in the passing game that he hadn’t seen, that we hadn’t practiced. I thought for the most part he did well.”

Baer wouldn’t say whether Parish would get his second start of the season at corner in the bowl game.

**Team hopes to get players healthy for bowl game**

Baer didn’t have a lengthy injury update list on Friday. He said defensive end Justin Turk should be okay and that Maurice Slovik, who was battling an ankle injury this season, showed up once the Irish got to Phoenix.

Coming out of the USC game, the Irish had some players beat up. Baer said he will hold some back in practice so they’re healthy for the bowl game.

**Practice schedule**

Baer said the Irish will practice today, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the players go home for a few days.

The team will reconvene in Phoenix on Dec. 22.

Contact Matt Lozar at mlozar@nd.edu

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**Oregon State happy to be in any bowl game**

No. 4 California’s BCS snub drops Beavers from Sun Bowl to Insight Bowl

By PAT LEONARD
Sports Editor

No. 4 Oregon State was poised to take a BCS bid to the Rose Bowl. Then, it happened.

The seventh Bears got smacked in favor of No. 6 Texas. The Oregon State secondary picture rippled throughout the Pac-10 conference, and the stage was set.

Notre Dame (6-5) would play Oregon State (6-5), not UCLA, in the Insight Bowl Dec. 28 in Phoenix.

“There’s going to be a lot said about how this all transpired,” fourth-year Oregon State head coach Mike Riley said. “I really have no opinion on it whatsoever. I said right after the Oregon game that I’m very excited to be going to a bowl game, they’ll tell us as where to go and we’ll be very pleased with it.”

Had California gone to the Rose Bowl, Oregon State would have met Purdue in the Sun Bowl. But Riley said his team is pleased with even receiving a bowl bid.

“It’s exciting for our team,” he said. “I think it’s great for the Beavers to have one of the last six years in bowl games. It’s a great opportunity to practice our young players.”

Oregon State routed Notre Dame 41-9 in the last postsea­son meeting between the two teams at the 2001 Fiesta Bowl. This time, the Beavers again bring a high-octane passing attack characteristic of Pac-10 teams against a Notre Dame secondary that has allowed 10 passing touchdowns in its last two games.

Quarterback Derek Anderson leads the Beav­er offense that averages 304 yards passing and 74 yards rushing per game. Anderson kept Oregon State close against No. 1 USC in a 28-20 loss, the same team that beat Notre Dame 41-10.

“Oregon State throws the ball all over the Irish,” inter­im head coach Kent Baer said. “They have got every­one imaginable, everything you can imagine in the passing game, and they throw for 300 yards and 94 yards rushing per game.”

Notre Dame’s defense gives up 274 yards passing and 94 yards rushing per game. Anderson (6-foot-6, 240 pounds) has thrown for 10,891 yards and 75 touchdowns in four seasons with the Insight Bowl remaining, both first all­time for an Oregon State quarterback. He also has the second most career passing yards of an active Division-I quarterback behind only Hawaii’s Timmy Chang (16,667 yards).

“I think Notre Dame and the Insight Bowl are attrac­tive to our team. Just like all of us, I think the players are excited just to learn where and who we wanted them to play.”

Mike Riley
Oregon State coach

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**Oregon State quarterback Derek Anderson looks for an open receiver during the Beavers’ game against USC.**

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**I think Notre Dame and the Insight Bowl are attractive to our team. Just like all of us coaches, I think the players are excited just to learn where and who we wanted them to play.”**

Contact Pat Leonard at pleonard@nd.edu

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**Baer decides not to pursue Utah State job**

The Irish in­terim head coach Kent Baer explained the Utah State situation showed how difficult a decision it was.

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The impressive statistic about Oregon State’s five losses — LSLU, Boise State, Arizona State, California and USC — is that all came against teams currently ranked in the Associated Press top 25 and all five are playing in bowl games.

**Irish in­terim head coach Kent Baer turned down the opportunity to be the head coach at Utah State.**

Contact Pat Leonard at pleonard@nd.edu
Notre Dame's roller-coaster season had plenty of highs — upsetting No. 7 Michigan, defeating No. 11 Tennessee in a packed Neyland Stadium — but also plenty of lows — losing to Brigham Young in the first game of the season, dropping consecutive home games to Boston College and Pittsburgh.

The team's up-and-down performance also featured the emergence of several Irish stars — running back Darius Walker and wide receiver Matt Shelton, among others. The Irish hope to finish the season on a good note with a victory in the Insight Bowl Dec. 28.
Former Irish players commend decision to hire Weis

By ERIC RETTER
Sports Writer

The NFL branch of the Notre Dame Alumni Association has no illusions as to why Charlie Weis came to the Irish.

"He's here to win football games," said Mark Bavaro, a former Irish tight end who, along with Weis, won the Super Bowl as part of the 1989 New York Giants.

Weis comes to South Bend with an impressive history of being part of teams that do just that, being the proud owner of three world championship rings and leading the offensive attack for a Patriots team poised to make a run for a fourth.

Weis' hiring ends a two-week long firestorm that began when Tyrone Willingham was dismissed on Nov. 30.

Weis had the situation resolved itself in my mind," I pumped about the hire," said Mark Bavaro and Marc Edw ards in separate telephone interviews Tuesday.

"The circus is over. We got a big-time coach, and we didn't have to settle. He's a name with Notre Dame ties," Marc Edwards, former Irish star and current NFL fullback said.

Willingham was dismissed on Nov. 30.

"And I hate to include (Bavaro) in that," said Edwards, "but he's more than capable.

"Obviously one of the two greatest influences of my life in the coaching profession was Bill Belichick," Bavaro said. "I mean, he took me, gave me an opportunity when I was an absolute nobody, hired me, and started me on special teams and then I moved to offense." Weis coached the Giants' running backs for two years before moving to New England coaching running backs, tight ends and wide receivers for the Patriots from 1993-99.

Weis then went to the New York Jets, where he made his debut at offensive coordinator in 1998. In 2000, he returned to New England as Bill Belichick's offensive coordinator, picking up two more Super Bowl rings.

"The foresight and insight that (Belichick) had about the things that I pride myself on - trying to take the best attributes of each person I have around and he's ahead of most people," Weis said.

Working under two of the era's most celebrated head coaches prepared him to take over one of the most visible jobs in the nation.

"I look at those guys, those gentleman who I have been able to be groomed under and be polished under and learned how to deal with the game of football and teaching football, dealing with all of the different elements and the distractions and get focused on what's really important," Weis said.

"Family is important to Weis and his wife, Maura, who have two children, Charlie and Hannah. In 2003, Weis and Maura started the Hannah & Friends Foundation for children and young adults affected by autism and global delays. Weis' daughter Hannah is affected by these developmental disorders.

"Maura and Charlie attended Weis' press conference where he announced his acceptance of the Notre Dame job."

"This is not a stepping stone," Weis said.

"This is an end-all-after this season. We come to Notre Dame, it's with the intent of retiring here. I'm proud to be here. I'm thankful to be here."

Contact Matt Lozar at ml佐ar@nd.edu

**White**

continued from page 1

Weis at 2 p.m. on Friday. Then at 3 p.m., University Provost Nathan Hatch, Executive Vice President Mark Malloy and other Notre Dame administrators spoke about the search for Notre Dame's new football coach.

White's experience was a success, but not without its problems. White will need to combine his good qualities for the program.

"We're going to keep them, and we are going to meet them. We'll be able to put our hands behind us, and we look forward to the future."

Contact Matt Lozar at ml佐ar@nd.edu

**Malloy**

continued from page 1

The reason it's been so tough for Notre Dame is all of the media criticism, is the University's high profile.

"People look at it and people attend to it. When we go to follow coaches, the press follows us around and that's not true at every school. We welcome that scrutiny," Jenkins said. "We think it's part of the game. We have high ideals for our program. We are going to keep them, and we are going to meet them."

Weis comes from the Bill Parcells and Bill Belichick coaching pedigree. Knowing anything about those two top-flight coaches reveals they are no-nonsense kind of people who don't make excuses for anything.

Parcells throws his rookies into the fire and challenges them when they ask for a play-off." Just ask Julius Jones how well that's worked.

"Belichick won't acknowledge injuries as an excuse in New England this year. The Patriots have been forced him into using wide receiver Troy Brown as a defensive back. By the way, the Patriots are 12-1.

Weis refused to make excuses Monday about the academic standards for recruiting, the challenging schedule and juggling act he'll have to perform holding two jobs for what many hope is until Feb. 6 in the winning locker room at Super Bowl XXXIV.

"I don't think [Weis' lack of college experience] is a negative at all," he said, "but I look at what we're going to get as a professional coach. He's won a couple Super Bowls."

For the sake of the winning formula, Weis steelers' head coach Bill Belichick had nothing but good things to say about Weis and gave his offensive coordinator his blessing to come to Notre Dame - after the Patriots season comes to a close.

"He's been here five years and has a lot to do with our success," Belichick told the Associated Press, "We all at the Patriots wish him well. But at the same time, we have a lot of football left, We have a job to do.

After years of success as an assistant coach, next year's NFL squad will be the first college or professional team Weis has managed. However, those who have worked with him don't expect the short answers about his lack of head coaching experience to manifest themselves any time soon.

"There's definitely question marks," Belichick said. "No one's sure [what will happen], but judging by his past record, he's more than capable."

Most seem convinced any head coaching experience Weis may have will be more than eclipsed by the ability he brings to the table.

"He has a brilliant football mind," past Notre Dame tight end and 10-year NFL veteran Creek Brown said. "That alone is part of it. He understands the big picture."

That mind will be charged with uniting a team made up of committed adults that has seen its share of controversy since Willingham departed.

"The only way you do that is by winning games," Edwards said. "You have to win football games, and, if you do that, then everyone will rally behind you."


Weis' desire to make this his last coaching job was shared by Edwards, who wants to see Weis reaping the Irish sidelines for a long time to come.

"He signed a long-term contract," Edwards said. "Hopefully he'll be the face of Notre Dame football for a long time to come.

Weis knows nasty is needed

**Recruiting**

continued from page 4

good if we can get him here in the next couple of days.

One of the potential drawbacks to Weis is his experience as an assistant coach.

"He has the NFL experience, yes, but now he's with a college team," Bruton said. "He has the NFL experience, yes, but now he's with a college team," Bruton said.

Contact Matt Lozar at ml佐ar@nd.edu

Weis is 5' 10" and weighs 220 pounds. His NFL experience will be an asset on the field in college.

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Contact Eric Retter at eretter@nd.edu
Players respond positively to Weis hire

By JOE HETTLER
Sports Writer

Brady Quinn looked like a kid on Christmas morning Monday.

The Irish signal-caller was all smiles after Notre Dame named New England Patriots offensive coordinator Charlie Weis its 28th football head coach at a morning press conference.

"Everybody is real excited," Quinn said. "We didn’t get to meet as a team and talk about it, but you can tell there’s a lot of excitement and happiness that, once this whole search is over — we know where we are — and seemingly (about) the person we have.

"After personally meeting with Weis around 9 p.m. Sunday evening, it didn’t take Quinn long to form an opinion of his new coach.

"Maybe five minutes," Quinn said, still grinning, "because he got right down to it. He started telling himself and what he’s all about and right then he had my attention. I’m just happy he’s here.

"Although the entire team didn’t speak with Weis before he was hired, many players had already met the 1978 Notre Dame graduate. Weis spoke to the Irish during winter workouts last year, and Tuck remembers the speech as anything but typical.

"Honestly, he was the first guest speaker that wasn’t hip hop hooray Notre Dame," Irish captain from his days as a resident in the Dome and is the first Notre Dame alumnus to coach the Irish.

"I think [an attitude change was needed]. Going 6-5, you have to change something," Fasano said. "I think that’s a big part of football, and I think he’s going to bring that team.

"Tuck said he liked what Weis said in the press conference, specifically when the new coach referred to Notre Dame as being "a nasty" team under Weis.

"When he said that, I actually started laughing because I’ve never heard someone at a press conference say ‘nasty.’ Tuck said. "But that’s a good thing because for us to get there, you want that attitude coming from the top person and filtering down to the team."

Perhaps the biggest benefactor of the Weis hiring is the Irish offense, specifically Quinn. Weis has developed New England’s former sixth-round pick, Tom Brady, into a two-time Super Bowl MVP, while leading the Patriots to wins in two of the last three Super Bowls.

"I’m pumped," Quinn said. "Honestly, going to the press conference, hearing him talk and watching the New England game (Sunday), it only brings excitement to me, and I just can’t wait to get out there and get my head in the playbook."

"As for Tuck, Notre Dame’s all-time sack leader has one year remaining of eligibility remaining, and he said he’s still waiting to decide whether to go into the NFL or stay in South Bend.

"That’s going through my head right now," Tuck said. "From the little I know about [Weis] and listening to him at the press conference, he seems like someone you can really like as a head coach."

Quinn said one of the most important criterions that Weis will bring Notre Dame’s football program is confidence. With so many accolades to his name, no one doubts Weis’ ability to help a team find success.

"It impresses me. It gives me a sense of confidence in him because he knows what it takes to get there," Quinn said. "He’s coaching guys, he’s had success and he’s winning Super Bowls. It’s only going to help us, to give us more confidence and inevitably buy into his program and his system."

Contact Joe Hettler at jhettler@nd.edu

Recruits excited about Weis tenure

By MIKE GILLOON
Sports Writer

As new Notre Dame coach Charlie Weis walked through the Joyce Center doors Sunday night a large Super Bowl ring sparkled on his left ring finger. Apparently it caught the eye of Irish recruits.

Marshall, Mich. quarterback Evan Sharpley was enthusiastic at the idea of playing under a man who developed New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady from a sixth-round draft pick to a Super Bowl MVP.

"He has a great track record," Sharpley said. "Pretty much everywhere he’s gone he’s done pretty well. It’s fun to watch him on Sundays as the Patriots have an exciting offense and they use them pretty well.

The combination of being on the coaching staff of three Super Bowl winning teams along with running one of the best offenses in the NFL, is very exciting to Sharpley.

"He’s a pretty good head coach," Hartfield, Conn. fullback Asaiah Schwegman said. "I’ve heard the experience. He’s done a heck of a job in the NFL. His pretty exciting to know that he’s won a couple Super Bowls."

England native, Ill. linebacker Scott Smith agreed with his future teammate.

"I’m definitely excited that they found a guy like coach Weis to come in," he said. "I don’t know much about him but I’m looking forward to getting a chance to talk with him.

David Bruton, a safety from Colorado, said Weis ’ head coach.

"This is obviously a high-profile, big-time job," Weis said. "But it’s one that I, a long, long time ago thought — wouldn’t that be something if you could ever be the head coach at University of Notre-Dame?

Weis picked up three Super Bowl rings on his way home to the Dome and is the first Notre Dame alumnus to coach the Irish since Hugh Devore served as interim coach in 1963.

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Before ND grad returns home

By KATE GALES
New Winnie

It was a 27-year journey from student section to sidelines for Charlie Weis.

Starting in New Jersey, stopping off in South Carolina and winning through New England, Weis has come home to end his career as Notre Dame football’s head coach.

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The New Jersey native was born in Trenton on March 30, 1956. He graduated from Middlesex High School in 1974 and the University of Notre Dame in 1978 with a bachelor’s degree in speech and drama, with an emphasis in communications. While coaching at the University of South Carolina in 1989, Weis earned his master’s degree in education.

In 1997, Weis began his career as an assistant coach at Boston (N.I.J) High School as an assistant coach. For the next five years, he was an assistant coach at Morristown (N.J) High School until moving to New Jersey to serve as a graduate assistant, volunteer coach and assistant recruiting coordinator from 1986-88. In 1989, Weis returned to New Jersey to spend one year as head coach at Franklin Township (N.J) High School.

In 1998, Weis earned his first Super Bowl ring during his first season with the New York Giants as a defensive assistant. Today, he credits Bill Parcells as one of the greatest influences on his career.

Charlie Weis Profile

College: Notre Dame

College Coaching Experience: South Carolina (1985-88)
Assistant Coach

Assistant Coach

New England Patriots (1993-96)
Assistant Coach

New York Jets (1997-99)
Offensive Coordinator/WR Coach

New England Patriots (2000-04)
Offensive Coordinator

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