Eric Musselman to lead Wolf Pack men’s basketball team

For an hour every morning, Eric Musselman does his best to wear out a piece of exercise equipment. At home or on the road, he seeks out a treadmill, bike or elliptical machine. The exercise is for himself, but the hour of reading that also takes place is for the hundreds of friends in the coaching community, the countless former, current or prospective players, and 17,000-plus followers on Twitter.

Prior to that daily hour of cardio work, the first-year Wolf Pack men’s basketball coach scours the Internet for material, from current events to leadership profiles to achievements in the sports world. He’ll check his phone and cull article suggestions from friends and family via emails and texts.

The results? Besides keeping the 50-year-old coach looking like he can still play some point guard himself, are the little nuggets of wisdom and encouragement that land on his Twitter account and are meant to inspire his players and recruits.

The sources of the quotes or anecdotes are wide-ranging, with recent offerings coming from the likes of Walter Payton, Ralph Waldo Emerson, LeBron James, Matt Damon and this one from Nelson Mandela: “There is no passion to be found playing small—in settling for a life that’s less than the one you are capable of living.”

Most of these thoughts are out there on social media for the world to see. Some get left purposefully in the locker room or sent directly to just one player, with the thought that one message to one player over the summer might make a difference in one game against one opponent down the road.

“I’m always looking for the little things, the messages and concepts that are going to build leadership and work ethic, said Musselman, who was introduced March 26 as the 18th head coach in the history of the Nevada program. “The biggest hurdle for any coach is to teach the work ethic that’s needed to play at a higher level, to achieve more in the classroom. From high school to junior college to college to the pros — every level that you go up, you have to increase and maximize your potential.”

This extra mile from Musselman is part of what has produced a distinguished coaching career that started at the age of 23, when he landed his first head coaching job in the Continental Basketball Association. He has twice been the head coach of NBA teams, first at Golden State and then with the Sacramento Kings. He’s coached national teams and recently served as a top assistant at Arizona State and LSU.
Reno native John Savage ’91 (physical education) at UCLA, Bruce, 33, worked for former Wolf Pack assistant coach and incredible recruiting reputation.” said. “He has an outstanding baseball background and has an community and is a great person and family man,” Knuth said. “He has an outstanding baseball background and has an incredible recruiting reputation.”

“We found a person of great character in T.J., who fits our community and is a great person and family man,” Knuth said. “He has an outstanding baseball background and has an incredible recruiting reputation.”

Bruce, 33, worked for former Wolf Pack assistant coach and Reno native John Savage ’91 (physical education) at UCLA, where they guided the Bruins to the 2013 College World Series Championship. He takes the helm of a Nevada program that won the school’s first Mountain West championship this spring after a 41-15 season.

And they are impressed with the academic vision that’s here. And when you pull up to campus, Lawlor Events Center looks like an NBA arena from the outside. So many places just have a gym. We have a big-time arena.”

Reno is not new for the Musselman family—which includes his wife, Danyelle, and their daughter, Mariah, along with sons, Michael and Matthew—as he coached the NBA D-League Reno Bighorns and led the team to their only conference title in franchise history during the 2010-11 season. Since immersing himself on campus and in the community, however, Musselman has found a “hidden gem.”

“Reno has embraced us with so much enthusiasm and there are so many down-to-earth people here,” the coach said. “This place is so scenic with the mountains and the ability to pop up to Tahoe and be on the beach and in the water so quickly. You see Wolf Pack everywhere here, clothes and bumper stickers and in the airport. That’s a neat thing. This community really embraces the University.”

Quick hits

T.J. BRUCE TAKES REIGNS OF PACK BASEBALL TEAM
The new era of Nevada baseball will be shaped by T.J. Bruce, who was named to the post in late June by Athletics Director Doug Knuth.

Bruce comes to Nevada after spending the last 10 years as one of the top assistant coaches in Southern California, first for five years at Long Beach State, and for the last five seasons at UCLA.

“We found a person of great character in T.J., who fits our community and is a great person and family man,” Knuth said. “He has an outstanding baseball background and has an incredible recruiting reputation.”

Bruce, 33, worked for former Wolf Pack assistant coach and Reno native John Savage ’91 (physical education) at UCLA, where they guided the Bruins to the 2013 College World Series Championship. He takes the helm of a Nevada program that won the school’s first Mountain West championship this spring after a 41-15 season.

FORMER OLYMPIAN TAKES OVER SWIMMING AND DIVING PROGRAM
A two-time Olympian and seven-time All-American, Neil Harper, arrives in Nevada to take over the Wolf Pack swimming and diving program.

A highly regarded coach in collegiate swimming, Harper was the head men’s and women’s coach for 14 seasons at Florida State, where he posted a .807 winning percentage with the women and won three ACC Coach of the Year honors.

“We are fortunate to have coach Harper join the Wolf Pack family,” Knuth said. “His experience and success at all levels of the sport will enhance our program and put the team in a position to compete for conference championships. His coaching success is matched by the quality of his character, and both are impressive. The future is bright for Wolf Pack swimming and diving.”

Harper boasts 22 years of collegiate coaching experience and has been massively successful in the Division I ranks. He boasts a combined .777 winning percentage and 174 career wins in 16 years as a women’s head coach. Harper guided both men’s and women’s programs at Florida State from 1999-2013 after beginning his head coaching career at Ohio State from 1997-99.

GRIMES MOVES INTO RADIO BOOTH
Former Nevada football standout Kevin Grimes ’10 (finance) will return to the Wolf Pack this season, joining Ryan Radtke in the radio booth on the Wolf Pack Radio Network. Grimes—a four-year letter winner and member of the 13-win 2010 team—will serve as a color analyst.

“I’ve been a huge fan of Ryan Radtke and Chris Vargas ’95 (finance) for many years and look forward to joining the radio broadcast team,” said Grimes, who tallied 179 career tackles at Nevada. “I’m excited for the opportunity to get involved with the Pack and be a voice in the community that I call home.”

The Wolf Pack Radio Network—owned and operated by the school’s multimedia rights holder, Learfield Sports—will carry every minute of Nevada football this season.