Doug Knuth joins Wolf Pack family

Doug Knuth took over as the University of Nevada’s eighth director of athletics this spring. As special assistant to the president and director of athletics, he brings more than 18 years of professional experience and achievement in athletics administration.

“Doug has tremendous experience and enthusiasm for college athletics and he has a great understanding of the role of education and athletics in the lives of our student-athletes,” said University President Marc Johnson. “He is a proven fundraiser who has had success in generating both traditional and entrepreneurial revenue streams. He is also very familiar with the Mountain West Conference and the challenges of conference realignment, and I am confident that Doug is the right person to continue the successes and tradition of Wolf Pack Athletics.”

Knuth spent the previous eight years at the University of Utah as the senior associate athletics director for External Relations. He led Utah to record fundraising in each of the last seven years. He led the Utes’ fundraising, marketing and ticketing efforts and oversaw the corporate partner program and athletics licensing/merchandising. He was also the primary liaison to University Development and Advancement. Knuth served as a member of Utah’s senior staff, participating in strategic planning, objectives and goals, and policies and procedures, in addition to administrative oversight over the sports of women’s basketball and men’s and women’s tennis.

He successfully launched a $150 million comprehensive athletics campaign and doubled the Utes’ annual fund in five years. Knuth also took a leadership role in the strategic planning process of Utah’s $1.2 billion university capital campaign. He is a member of the prestigious I-A Athletic Director’s Association Fellows Program, served on the NCAA Tennis Committee from 2007-10 and has held leadership roles in the National Association of Athletic Development Directors since 2010.

Prior to Utah, Knuth served as the assistant athletics director for development at Michigan State for five years and was responsible for the annual giving program. He also managed major gifts associated with the expansion of Spartan Stadium through suite and club seats sales.

He started his career in athletics administration and fundraising at the University of Connecticut and also spent time at the University of Massachusetts and Ohio University.

Knuth earned his bachelor’s degree in business administration at the University of Connecticut in 1994, where he was also a four-year letter winner and captain on the men’s tennis team. He holds master’s degrees in sports administration and facility management from Ohio University (1998) and business administration from Northwood University (2002).

A native of Fairfield, Conn., Knuth and his wife, Marilyn, have a daughter, Gabby, 4, and a son, Lance, 2.

“I would like to thank the search committee, the athletics staff and coaches, and especially President Johnson for this outstanding opportunity to lead the University of Nevada athletics department,” Knuth said. “I am excited to join a University which places a high value on the transformational power of education as well as the power of positive athletics. I believe Nevada is poised for greatness.”

New Director of Athletics Doug Knuth meets Wolf Pack fans at Mackay Stadium, where nearly 5,000 fans gathered to watch the Silver and Blue Game in April.

Pack Tracks
stories by Rhonda Landin Bennett, associate athletics director for communications
Brian Polian gears up for first season at helm

The Brian Polian era will officially begin as the 2013 football season kicks off this fall. Polian came to Nevada after successful stints at Texas A&M (2012), Stanford (2010-11), Notre Dame (2005-09), University of Southern Florida (2004) and Buffalo (2001-03). He replaced Chris Ault, who stepped down in December after 28 seasons on the sidelines and more than 40 years at Nevada.

Coming off its eighth consecutive bowl appearance, Nevada will play all six of its home games on Saturdays this season, featuring Mountain West conference games against Hawai’i, Air Force, UNLV and San Jose State, and non-conference games against UC Davis and BYU.

The Wolf Pack will kick-off the 2013 season on the road against Pac-12 foe UCLA on Aug. 31. Nevada and UC Davis will square off in the home opener at Mackay Stadium on Saturday Sept. 7, before the team will make its first road trip to Tallahassee, Fla., to face Florida State on Sept. 14.

The Pack returns home for a pair of games, opening Mountain West Conference play with contests against Hawai’i (Sept. 21) and Air Force (Sept. 28). The team will head to San Diego State on Oct. 4.

Nevada will face Boise State on Oct. 19 before hosting UNLV in the Battle for the Fremont Cannon during Nevada Day Weekend (Oct. 26). The team will hit the road for matchups with Fresno State (Nov. 2) and Colorado State (Nov. 9) before coming home to play San Jose State on Nov. 16. Nevada and BYU will close out the regular season at Mackay Stadium with a showdown on Nov. 30.

Nevada football season tickets for 2013 are now on sale and start at just $90 for adults and $35 for youth (8th grade and younger). A limited number of Premium Field (section D) seats still remain and are available on a first-come, first-served basis for $280 per seat.

For more information or to purchase season tickets, call or visit the Link Piazzo Ticket Office at Legacy Hall at (775) 348-PACK (7225) or go online at nevadawolfpack.com.
34 Wolf Pack student-athletes reach ultimate goal of graduation

Thirty-four Wolf Pack student-athletes representing 13 teams have applied for graduation at the University of Nevada this spring and summer.

The Wolf Pack women’s swimming and diving team is represented by seven student-athletes, while Nevada’s women’s track and field program has five graduates. The Wolf Pack baseball and softball teams are represented by four graduates each, while Nevada’s rifle team is graduating three student-athletes. Nevada’s men’s basketball, women’s basketball and women’s soccer teams have two graduates each, while the Wolf Pack football, men’s golf, skiing, men’s tennis and volleyball teams are each represented by one graduate. In addition to the 34 student-athletes, five members of the Nevada spirit program will also be earning their degrees this spring and summer.

Including this spring and summer’s 34 graduates, Nevada has seen 533 of its student-athletes graduate in the past eight years. The Wolf Pack’s Graduation Success Rate is at its all-time high of 80 percent and has improved in each of the last eight years.

“Congratulations to all of our student-athletes who are graduating this spring and summer,” said Nevada Director of Athletics Doug Knuth. “Getting their college degrees is the ultimate goal for our student-athletes, and we wish our student-athletes the best as they leave the University of Nevada and enter the next phase of their lives.”

Men’s golf, rifle teams recognized by NCAA for academics

For the third time for each program, Nevada’s men’s golf and rifle teams have earned Public Recognition Awards as part of the 2012 NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program.

Each of the teams scored a perfect 1,000 on the academic progress rate (APR) during the 2011-12 academic year, and each has a multi-year average of 1,000 after scoring a perfect score for each of the last four years. The Public Recognition Award comes for being part of the top 10 percent of all teams in their sport. This is the third consecutive year that Nevada’s men’s golf team has been publicly recognized, and it marks the second straight season of recognition for the rifle team, which also was honored for 2008-09.

“It is a significant achievement for a team to be recognized publicly by the NCAA for one season of excellence,” said Dr. Jean Perry, Nevada’s faculty athletic representative and special assistant to the president for athletics academics and compliance. “For these teams to be honored for the third time each is an accomplishment to be celebrated.”

The data used for this year’s APR includes student-athletes who competed from 2008-09 through 2011-12. For the men’s golf team, that includes a number of standouts, including Taylor Coffman ’11 (mathematics), Ryan Hallisey ’11 (finance) and Scott Smith ’11 (management). Hallisey works locally at the Sierra Nevada Corporation in Reno while Coffman recently completed a master’s degree in mathematics from Nevada. Smith is a professional who has played in two PGA Tour events and last year qualified for the U.S. Open at the Olympic Club.

“I’m proud of the accomplishments of our players, on and off the course, and thrilled that our program has received this prestigious recognition for the third year in a row,” said men’s golf coach Jacob Wilner.

Nevada rifle coach Fred Harvey noted that many of his student-athletes from those seasons are either in or have completed graduate school, including Andy Hickey, a former All-American in graduate school at Nevada, and Heather Horn, who recently completed a master’s in film production from Chapman University.

“Dempster Christenson, who was a six-time NRA All-American, is not in graduate school, but he is on the U.S. National Team and he has won an Olympic slot for the United States team for the next games in Brazil,” Harvey said.
Wolf Pack Wall welcomes at airport

Visitors to the Reno-Tahoe International Airport will once again be introduced to the University of Nevada with the unveiling of the newly redesigned Wolf Pack Wall.

Made possible through the generosity of longtime University supporter and community business leader Rick Reviglio and a partnership between the University of Nevada and the Reno-Tahoe International Airport, the Wolf Pack Wall features large still photographs of some of the biggest achievements in the history of Wolf Pack Athletics. It also includes a video screen that will show academic and athletic highlights, and shelving to display athletics memorabilia.

The Wolf Pack Wall is located on the second floor of the airport, just past security near the new High Mountain Market shops.

“Thanks to the Reviglio family, the airport’s new Wolf Pack Wall makes an important statement to every traveler that Reno is a university town,” said Krys Bart, Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority President/CEO. “The new design of the Wolf Pack Wall is the finishing touch on the $27 million Gateway Project that was designed to give 3.8 million travelers per year a sense of place when they come and go from our community.”

Reviglio first came up with the idea of having the University of Nevada featured at the airport after seeing the pride that the city of Boise shows for the Boise State Broncos at its airport. He was the primary donor for the original Wolf Pack Den display, which was installed on the airport’s connector concourse in 2008. The newly redesigned Wolf Pack Wall replaces that original display.

“On the doorstep to our community is the gateway to one of our most valued treasures: the University of Nevada,” said Reviglio, the president of Western Nevada Supply in Reno. “Every person who flies in and out of our community should be reminded of this jewel.”

The new Wolf Pack Wall was unveiled in a May press conference featuring Reviglio, Bart and Wolf Pack Director of Athletics Doug Knuth, as well as Nevada mascots, cheerleaders and band members.

“It is wonderful to have the University and Wolf Pack Athletics join in welcoming and introducing visitors to our region,” said University of Nevada, Reno President Marc Johnson. “We are grateful to be an integral part of our community, and this display sets the stage for visitors to know this is a University-based community. The support of the Reno-Tahoe International Airport and the Reviglio family in making this possible is deeply appreciated.”

Nevada to unveil Chris Ault Field at Mackay Stadium

The University of Nevada, Reno and Wolf Pack Athletics will honor the contributions of former football head coach Chris Ault ’69 (physical education), ’73M.Ed. (school administration) has made to the athletics program by naming the field at Mackay Stadium after the College Hall of Fame inductee.

Chris Ault Field at Mackay Stadium will be unveiled at Nevada’s home opener vs. UC Davis on Sept. 7.

The winningest coach in school history with a career record of 233-109-1 in 28 seasons, Ault guided Nevada from Division II to I-AA glory in the Big Sky Conference during the 1980s and early 90s, into I-A and the Big West Conference in 1992 and on to the Western Athletic Conference and the Mountain West Conference. He won 10 conference championships and took the Wolf Pack to postseason play 16 times, including 10 bowl games in 12 football seasons. He leaves a legacy contributions to the game, perhaps none of which greater than his creation of the Pistol offense in 2005, now employed by hundreds of teams at every level of football.

“Chris Ault has left an indelible footprint on the University of Nevada, Wolf Pack Athletics and college football, and it is only fitting that his name will grace the field on which he built that legacy of success and tradition,” said Nevada Director of Athletics Doug Knuth. “We are pleased that we can honor Coach Ault for his Hall of Fame career and service to the University in this lasting way.”

Details about the design and placement of the honor on the field as well as information about the celebration at Nevada’s home opener will be unveiled later this summer.