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Mavericks forced to look for another offensive coach

By Chad Courier
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MANKATO — For the sixth consecutive season, the Minnesota State football team will have a new offensive coordinator.

Garin Higgins, who came to Minnesota State last offseason from Northwestern Oklahoma, has resigned and accepted the position of offensive coordinator at Northeastern State University at Tahlequah, Okla.

"I think the big reason (for leaving) is that he wanted to get back close to his family," Minnesota State coach Jeff Jamrog said. "He's going back to where he started coaching."



Garin Higgins is leaving MSU for the same position in Oklahoma.

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MAVERICKS: Jamrog calls Higgins good coach

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Higgins, a native of Blackwell, Okla., was a graduate assistant at Northeast Oklahoma from 1992-94 before becoming the head coach at Northwest Oklahoma State University.

Dan Runkle was his own offensive coordinator in 2001, then Dave Paffenroth took over as coordinator under Clarence Holley. After Paffenroth, Holley hired Brooks Hollingsworth, who left shortly before Holley did. After Jamrog was hired, he chose Dan McLaughlin as offensive coordinator, and after one season, McLaughlin was hired as head coach at Wayne State, opening the position for Higgins.

"Garin's a good football coach," Jamrog said. "I know he was frustrated by how things went. We had some injuries, an inexperienced offensive line, a new quarterback, (running back) Sean Treasure got hurt. There were a lot of reasons why it didn't come together."

Higgins came to Minnesota State with the reputation of being innovative and free-

wheeling. However, Minnesota State ranked last in the North Central Conference in scoring offense (16.0 points per game), total offense (263.2 yards per game) and passing offense (173.0 yards), and the Mavericks were sixth in the NCC in rushing (90.2 yards per game). Minnesota State finished at 2-9 and 0-6 in NCC games, scoring 101 points in victories over Oklahoma Panhandle State and Upper Iowa and 161 points in the nine losses.

"We never got into a rhythm," Jamrog said. "(The season-opener against) Northwest Missouri State may have been our best offensive game, and normally you want to say that the last game was your best."

With recruiting in full swing, Jamrog said he's already begun interviewing potential replacements. He hopes to have a new coach hired by the first week of January.

"I have some quality candidates in mind, some with more of a background in the North Central Conference," Jamrog said. "I'm excited about the potential candidate pool that's out there."