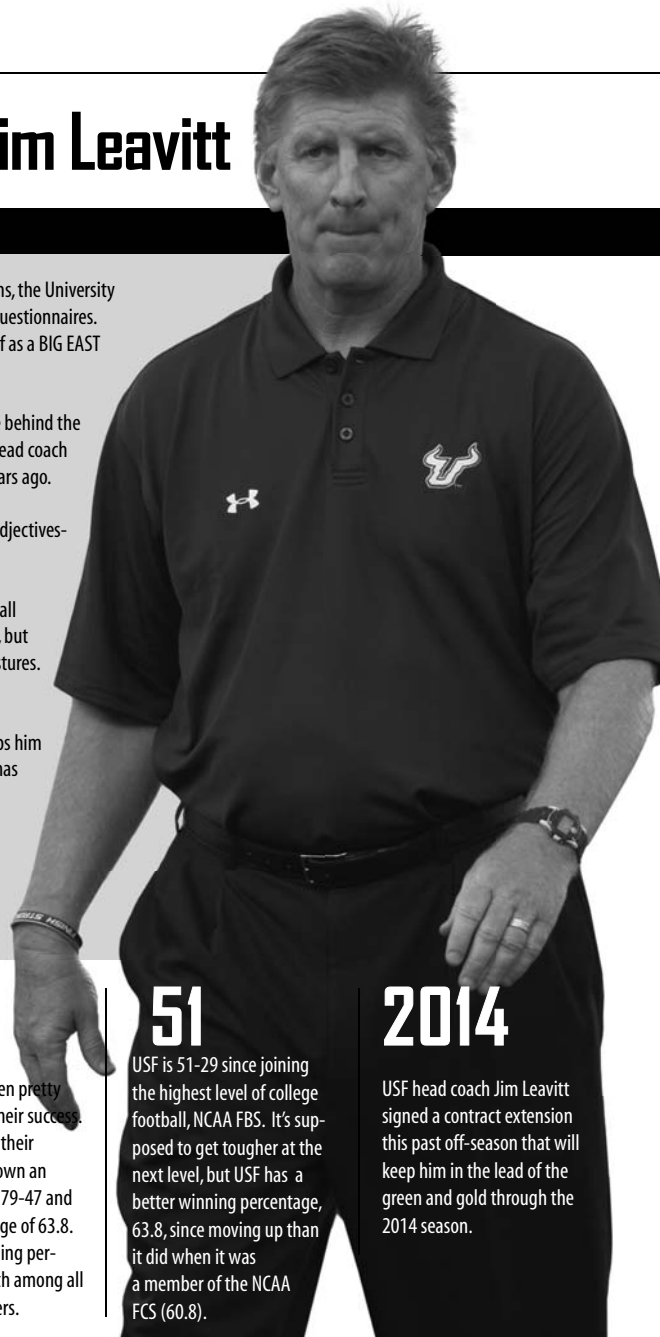




# Head Coach Jim Leavitt



As a handful of programs around the country look into and are beginning football programs, the University of South Florida department of athletics has fielded a myriad of phone calls, surveys and questionnaires. The administrators and researchers want to know how USF has been able to establish itself as a BIG EAST power and top 25 program in a short span of 11 years.

While there is not one definite answer or magic bullet, there has been one consistent force behind the Bulls unfathomable rise to the upper echelon of college football. That presence has been head coach Jim Leavitt, who built the program from scratch on unchartered practice fields some 12 years ago.

It makes sense that the St. Petersburg native is most commonly characterized with three adjectives—loyalty, focus and intensity.

An 11-year stay at one school is unheard of among the current generation of college football head coaches. Of course the legends like Bobby Bowden and Joe Paterno are the standard, but mentors with success like Leavitt at a growing program are usually looking for greener pastures. Not Leavitt, who says, "I will probably retire at USF."

The man is driven by a will to outwork every other coach in the game. A tireless focus keeps him in the office until the early morning hours during the regular season and is the reason he has not taken a full, consecutive week of vacation during his entire USF career.

Ask his players and they will undoubtedly laugh about his intensity. The sprints on the practice field, the constant pacing and movement or the way he constantly assesses his team's mental state. But don't take it as overbearing. The coach has also been known to do a head first slide onto the practice field when his team needs a good laugh.

## One

In the era of coaches leaving other programs before the ink even dries on their contract, Jim Leavitt is the only head coach USF has known. Despite several overtures, Leavitt tells everyone that will listen that, "USF is the perfect job for me."

## 11

Leavitt has the longest tenure of any BIG EAST coach at their current school. In fact, Leavitt and UConn's Randy Edsall are the only mentors with at least six seasons at their schools.

## 18

The Bulls have been pretty good at rushing their success. Just 11 years into their history, the Bulls own an all-time record of 79-47 and winning percentage of 63.8. The all-time winning percentage ranks 18th among all NCAA FBS members.

## 51

USF is 51-29 since joining the highest level of college football, NCAA FBS. It's supposed to get tougher at the next level, but USF has a better winning percentage, 63.8, since moving up than it did when it was a member of the NCAA FCS (60.8).

## 2014

USF head coach Jim Leavitt signed a contract extension this past off-season that will keep him in the lead of the green and gold through the 2014 season.



Perhaps nothing better illustrates Leavitt's intensity than the way he sprints onto the field at full bore before each and every game.

# The Only Coach In USF History



## Leavitt as a Beef Stud

The story continued into basketball season, when Leavitt sponsored Finish Strong night to raise awareness and funds for cancer in honor of Jeff Wagner. As a sign of support Coach Leavitt dressed up (pictured to left) as a Beef Stud, The Beef Studs are the most vocal and vibrant student fan group on campus. He took the court during the first television timeout and then went and cheered on the Bulls from the student section.

## Finish Strong

It became the team motto for the 2007 season prior to the Auburn game. And the motto couldn't have been played out any better as the Bulls went on to an overtime win at Jordan-Hare Stadium.

Would you believe the real story behind the motivational theme is even better? The idea came from Coach Leavitt's close friend Jeff Wagner (left), who is battling cancer. Wagner was a die-hard USF fan before there was a football team and his illness struck many in the community hard. In the frequent letters he wrote to Leavitt and the team, he always signed off with the phrase, "Finish Strong." Leavitt was inspired by his resiliency against a battle much tougher than any on the football field and asked Wagner if he could use it as a rallying cry for his team.

So as he met with his team one final time before kickoff in a hostile SEC stadium. Leavitt asked his team for 60 minutes of focus and he told them the story of Jeff Wagner. And then he told them to *FINISH STRONG* and win this one for the Bulls' biggest fan.



# Coaching Staff

# 189 Years of Experience



Defensive Backs Coach Troy Douglas

- 3** Three coaches on the USF staff have head coaching experience. Carl Franks was the head coach at Duke, John Hendrick at Benedict College and Greg Gregory at Missouri Southern State.
- 3** Outside of current coordinators Wally Burnham and Greg Gregory, three assistants also have a experience as offensive or defensive coordinators - Carl Franks, John Hendrick and Mike Canales.
- 4** The USF coaching staff has four national championships among them. Two were won on the playing field by Kevin Patrick (Miami), while Wally Burnham (FSU) and Carl Franks (Florida) also have one as coaches.
- 21** The assistant coaches at USF have 21 former players that are on NFL rosters heading into the 2008 season.
- 29** The Bulls coaching staff ranks second with 29 total years of tenure at USF. The total ranks second among schools in the BIG EAST.
- 189** The Bulls coaching staff has a combined total of 189 years of coaching experience on staff, led by defensive coordinator Wally Burnham, who has been in the game for 36 years. Add in director of high school relations Rich Rachel and his 38 years and the number easily clears 200.

	<b>Wally Burnham</b> Associate Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers
	<b>Mike Canales</b> Pass Game Coordinator/Wide Receivers
	<b>Troy Douglas</b> Defensive Backs
	<b>Carl Franks</b> Recruiting Coordinator/Running Backs
	<b>Greg Gregory</b> Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks
	<b>John Hendrick</b> Defensive Line
	<b>Kevin Patrick</b> Defensive Ends
	<b>Larry Scott</b> Tight Ends
	<b>Mike Simmonds</b> Offensive Line



» Mike Jenkins, Trae Williams and Ben Moffitt weren't the only Bulls to go pro in 2008. Defensive Coordinator and Associate Head Coach Wally Burnham (pictured above) and his defensive staff were invited by Tony Dungy to Indianapolis to watch the Colts during an Offseason Training Activity (OTA) from June 6-8.

Running Backs Coach Carl Franks



Offensive Line Coach Mike Simmonds

# Offensive Bull Rush



Senior WR Taurus Johnson (left) and sophomore RB Mike Ford.



Sophomore Dontavia Bogan

Sophomore Jamar Taylor



## It's Good To Be Green And Gold

Options abound for the USF offense this fall.

Coming off a record-breaking season in 2007, the offensive side of the ball returns 10 starters and depth at nearly every position. The Bulls only lost four regular contributors from last season - Amarri Jackson, Nick Capogna, Jared Carnes and Walt Walker.

The returners are led by Heisman candidate QB Matt Grothe, who is arguably the one of the two most dangerous dual threat quarterbacks in college football. Behind him is a stable of running backs, which is headlined by senior Ben Williams and former five-star recruits Mike Ford and Jamar Taylor. Spread out to the slots will be a group of 10 receivers that pulled in catches last season. On the offensive line, the Bulls return four starters including preseason national award candidates Ryan Schmidt and Jake Griffin.



- 1** In the first season under new offensive coordinator Greg Gregory, the Bulls posted program records in total offense and yards per game. The Bulls lit up the scoreboard too, averaging 34.7 points per game.
- 3** Matt Grothe was one of only three NCAA FBS quarterbacks to run for more than 850 yards and pass for 2,500 yards. The others were Heisman Trophy winner Tim Tebow and Central Michigan's Dan Lefevour.
- 8** Eight receivers that reeled in a catch last season return on offense. The leader of the group in 2007 was redshirt-freshman Carlton Mitchell, who had 34 catches for 537 yards and 14.5 per reception.
- 30** USF scored a program record 30 rushing touchdowns in 2007. The RB duo of Mike Ford (12) and Ben Williams (6), combined for 18, while QB Matt Grothe (10) and Ford (12) became the first duo in USF history with double digits rushing TDs in the same season.
- 39** The Bulls only lost 39 rushing yards to graduation in 2007. And that is coming off a season when Grothe set a program record for rushing yards by a QB (872) and the team fell just 28 yards shy of the program record for total rushing yards.
- 91** The Bulls return players that accounted for 91 percent of the receptions in 2007 and 88 percent of the receiving yards.



# Bull-Dozing Defense

Junior DB Jerome Murphy

**1** The USF defense led the country in turnovers last season with 42 in 13 games. They also led the country in fumbles recovered with 19, while ranking fourth in interceptions with 23.

**3** Just like in 2006, the USF defense will again have three players on national award lists before the 2007 season. The only thing that will change are all the names: In 2007 DE George Selvie, LB Tyrone McKenzie and DB Nate Allen.

**5** USF has ranked in the top 30 in total defense five of the last six seasons, including being ranked 17th in 2002, 2003 and 2005. The Bulls have ranked no lower than 24th in pass efficiency defense during the same time frame.

**13** Current Jacksonville Jaguar Trae Williams had more interceptions than any player in college football the last two seasons with a total of 13. Of the six he picked in 2007, he took three back for TDs.

**108** Over the last three seasons the USF defense has forced 98 turnovers and if you included blocked kicks, the number jumps to 108. The Bulls' D has blocked 10 kicks, intercepted 51 passes and recovered 47 fumbles.

**250** No player that touches a NCAA FBS football field at the start of 2008 can claim to have more tackles the last two seasons than Bulls LB Tyrone McKenzie. McKenzie had 129 at Iowa State in 2006 and a school record 121 for USF in 2007.

## Scoop & Score

It's a mantra of the defensive staff and something that is routinely hollered from the sidelines during games and practice. Scoop and Score. It refers to picking up a fumble and returning it for a touchdown. The Bulls had a banner year for scoring on turnovers in 2007. Not only did they lead the country in fumbles recovered and turnovers forced, the Bulls were also third in tackles for loss and fourth in interceptions. And they capitalized on those opportunities by six defensive touchdowns - five off interceptions and one on a fumble recovery. Some of the proof is in the pictures below:



Tyrone McKenzie



Nate Allen (above) returns a fumble against West Virginia.