

CARDS: Steelers assistant named new head coach

TRIBUNE
JAN 15 2007
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FROM PAGE C1

clearly the right one for this team.”

Whisenhunt, who returned to Pittsburgh Sunday, was not made available for comment.

With Whisenhunt's trip home and the Martin Luther King holiday today, a news conference won't be held until Tuesday.

“It's good we can move on to the next phase,” Cardinals tackle Reggie Wells said.

The financial aspects of the deal were unavailable, although the Cardinals were expected to pay Whisenhunt somewhere between \$2 million and \$2.5 million a season.

Green was making \$2.5 million a year.

Graves raved about the “plan” Whisenhunt has for the Cards, although Graves declined to give many specifics. Instead, Graves said Whisenhunt would reveal details when he is introduced Tuesday.

That includes whether Whisenhunt will retain any of the seven holdover assistant coaches from Green's staff that remain under contract, specifically defensive coordinator Clancy Pendergast.

Pendergast did meet with Whisenhunt before Whisenhunt was hired, however, and Pendergast is expected to return.

There are a couple of holdover offensive assistant coaches who are unlikely to stay, most notably offensive coordinator Mike Kruczek, who did not mesh well with quarterback Matt Leinart.

One possibility for offensive coordinator is Steelers receivers coach Bruce Arians.

The offense, however, will be shaped by Whisenhunt, who directed a Pittsburgh offense that helped win a Super Bowl in the 2005 season and finished seventh in the NFL in 2006.

Whisenhunt's success with young Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger was another factor in his hiring, given the Cards' own young quarterback in Leinart.

Graves insisted the Cardinals had not leaned toward getting an offensive coach, despite the fact that six of the eight candidates interviewed had backgrounds on the offensive side.

But it is clear it was important, given the bulk of the Cards' star power is on offense, with Leinart, running back Edgerrin James and wide receivers Anquan Boldin and Larry Fitzgerald. The organization said it believes it should be more effective on that side of the ball.

The Cards were 18th in the NFL in total offense this season.

“If you look at our team and who we have, we are definitely a team that can build around the offense,” Wells said.

Ken Whisenhunt file

Age: 44

Cardinals contract: Signed through 2010, team option for 2011

College: Georgia Tech

Hometown: Atlanta, Ga.

Playing experience: Tight end and punter at Georgia Tech. Played nine seasons as tight end with Falcons, Redskins and Jets from 1985-1993.



Coaching resume:

1995-96 Vanderbilt University (special teams, tight ends and H-backs)

1997-98 Baltimore Ravens (tight ends)

1999 Cleveland Browns (special teams)

2000 New York Jets (tight ends)

2001-2003 Pittsburgh Steelers (tight ends)

2004-2006 Pittsburgh Steelers (offensive coordinator)

Family: Wife Alice, son Kenneth Jr. (15) and daughter Mary Ashley (13).

“Hopefully he is a guy who can move us further (on offense) than were we were.”

Defensively, Whisenhunt had said he planned on being aggressive as well. He also seemed to feel he could work with a majority of the current roster, noting that in Pittsburgh “rather than try to make (players) fit our scheme, we have tried to adjust our scheme to fit them.”

Whisenhunt and Texans assistant head coach Mike Sherman were the only candidates to be brought back for second interviews. Graves emphasized Whisenhunt was the only candidate who was offered a job, contrary to a few different reports — including a couple that said Sherman had asked for a \$4 million salary.

“There were a lot of rumors circulating over the last week over what was taking place with our interview process and I will say, quite frankly, a lot of those reports were misleading and false,” Graves said.

In coming to the Cardinals, Whisenhunt faces a daunting history. Each of the last nine coaches of the franchise that have been around for at least five games have losing records.

The last coach to leave with a winning mark? Don Coryell, who was 42-27-1 from 1973-77.

“I think he'll be a good head coach,” Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger said on ESPN News Sunday. “He's got a lot of offensive weapons to work with. ... He might be considered for that Coach of the Year (award).”

The Cardinals can only hope.

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