

Jason Kaufusi

Huskies defensive run game coordinator and defensive line coach

Football • Salt Lake City, Utah

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Biography

Jason Kaufusi is a former standout defensive end at the University of Utah (2000–2003) who has transitioned seamlessly into coaching, earning a reputation as a top defensive line specialist. Over the years, he has coached at Weber State, BYU, Nevada, and UCLA, before joining the University of Washington. Kaufusi is known not only for his expertise in teaching line play but also for his hands-on approach to recruiting. His passion and high-energy style have produced significant improvements in sacks, tackles for loss, and overall defensive performance at nearly every stop in his career.

Statement

Relentless energy, physicality, and attention to detail up front set the tone for a championship defense. That mindset begins in the trenches.

Achievement

2016 FCS Playoffs - Weber State University

Promoted to Defensive Coordinator, leading the Wildcats to their first FCS Playoffs appearance in seven years and achieving the top passing defense in the Big Sky Conference.

All-Mountain West Players - University of Nevada

Coached defensive linemen Malik Reed and Korey Rush, both of whom earned first-team All-Mountain West honors under his guidance.

UCLA - Outside Linebackers Improvements

Instrumental in improving the Bruins' defensive performance, contributing to a significant increase in quarterback sacks from 11 in 2018 to 26 in 2019.

Education

University of Utah

Kaufusi's freshman season with the Utes was the 2000 season, in which he started nine games. In the 2000 season, Kaufusi recorded 63 tackles and eight sacks and was voted Co-Mountain West Freshman of the Year. In the 2001 and 2002 seasons, Kaufusi earned first-team All-Mountain West honors.

East High School

Won the Utah 4A state title in 1996, when Kaufusi was a senior. Kaufusi played defensive end and tight end for East High; in his senior season, he caught 17 passes for 327 yards as a tight end and recorded 16 sacks as a defensive end.

Feature

UW Coach Comparison: Kaufusi Does Work of Two Men for Husky Football Team

Last season, the University of Washington football team had an edge-rusher coach and a defensive-tackle coach on the payroll, giving each of those positions groups its own mastermind and confidante. Jason Kaufusi handles both jobs now.

Jason Kaufusi Wants To See What Everyone Brings To The Table

First-year Washington defensive line coach Jason Kaufusi is still getting to know his players, so he wants them to work on their fundamentals, but he feels like they are headed in the right direction.

PRINCIPLES

- High Motor & Intensity: Demands that every snap be played at full speed.
 - Detail-Oriented: Believes that success on the line is shaped by consistent, precise technique.
 - Player Empowerment: Encourages feedback from players, fostering a sense of shared responsibility.
 - Team-First Mentality: Stresses coordination among the entire defense, aligning pass rush with coverage strategies.
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PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Malik Reed

University of Nevada | Football | 2019 - 2019

Coached Malik Reed who earned first-team All-Mountain West honors in the 2017 season.

Josh Woods

UCLA | Football | 2019 - 2019

Saw action as a starter in all 12 games ... Led the team with 4.5 sacks ... Made his first career interception at Washington State to along with a sack and two fumble recoveries to help key a comeback from a 32-point second-half deficit ... Had a season-high six tackles versus Cincinnati and Cal ... Credited with at least four tackles in nine games ... Fourth on the team with 51 tackles ... Had a season-high 2.0 tackles for loss, including 1.5 sacks, at Stanford ... Registered a sack at USC ... Rated 17th in the Pac-12 in sacks/game (0.38) ... Tied for fifth in the conference in fumbles recovered/game (0.17) ... Named second-team all-conference by the Associated Press

Korey Rush

University of Nevada | Football | 2018 - 2018

Named first team All-Mountain West for the first time in his career and was awarded the team's Defensive Hustle Award ... Started all nine games until suffering an injury that kept him out of the final three of the regular season ... Ranked second on the team in sacks (6.0) and tackles for loss (12.5) ... Finished second in the conference in tackles for loss per game (1.4) and fourth in sacks per game (0.67) ... Named the Mountain West Defensive Player of the Week

ATHLETIC CAREER

Defensive End — University of Utah

Mountain West | Football | 2000 - 2003

Defensive End — East High School

| Football | 1993 - 1997

COACHING CAREER

Defensive Line Coach — University of Washington

NCAA Division I - National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I | Football | 2024

Jason Kaufusi will serve as the Huskies defensive run game coordinator and defensive line coach in 2024. He comes to Seattle from Arizona, where he spent the previous two seasons under head coach Jedd Fisch.

Outside Linebackers Coach — University of Arizona

NCAA Division I - National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I | Football | 2021 - 2024

Hired by head coach Jedd Fisch to coach outside linebackers at Arizona in December of 2021

Outside Linebackers Coach — UCLA

NCAA Division I - National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I | Football | 2019 - 2020

In 2019, Kaufusi was hired as the outside linebackers coach at UCLA. One of the linebackers of Kaufusi's unit, Josh Woods, posted career highs in tackles, tackles for loss, and quarterback sacks. UCLA increased its total number of quarterback sacks from 11 in the 2018 season to 26 in 2019.

Defensive Line Coach — University of Nevada

NCAA Division I - National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I | Football | 2018 - 2019

Defensive line coach for the 2017 and 2018 seasons. Kaufusi coached Malik Reed and Korey Rush, who earned first-team All-Mountain West honors in the 2017 and 2018 seasons, respectively.

Defensive Coordinator — Weber State University

NCAA Division I - National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I | Football | 2010 - 2016

Defensive ends coach, where he spent the 2010 and 2011 seasons. Returned to Weber State in 2014, and he went on to coach the defensive ends there for the 2014 and 2015 seasons. After Weber State led the Big Sky Conference in total defense in the 2015 season, Kaufusi was promoted to defensive coordinator in 2016. With Kaufusi as defensive coordinator, Weber State reached the Football Championship Subdivision playoffs for the first time since 2009. That same season, Weber State ranked first in the Big Sky Conference in passing defense, allowing a mere 193.5 yards per game, and five of the Wildcats' defensive players earned all-conference honors.

Cornerbacks Coach — University of Utah

NCAA Division I - National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I | Football | 2009 - 2010

Cornerbacks Coach, which contributed to a passing defense that ranked 14th in the nation that season

Assistant Coach — Cottonwood Highschool

| Football | 2004 - 2008

Began my coaching career in 2004, embarking on a four-year stint as an assistant coach at Cottonwood High School in Murray, Utah, a suburb of Salt Lake City. I coached Cottonwood's defensive line, and was also in charge of academics and helped with strength and conditioning.
