

Temple Heads Toward Spring With New Coach

Written by Sean Stires

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Notre Dame's football season has been over for just a little bit more than a week, but the majority of college football teams across the country saw their seasons end nearly two months ago. Those teams have long been in preparation for the next phase – spring football.

The Fighting Irish have 12 regular season games scheduled for the 2013 season, and ISD will take a look at the top changes each of those opponents has heading into spring football – beginning with Temple.

The Owls are coming off a 4-7 season in 2012, which was their second under the now departed Steve Addazio. The one time Notre Dame assistant (1999-2001), who led Temple to a 9-4 record in 2011 after taking over for current Miami head coach Al Golden, is now the head coach at Boston College.

Temple's new head coach is Matt Rhule, who has his first head coaching job after spending the last 15 years as an assistant coach. Rhule was the New York Giants' assistant offensive line coach in 2012, but he returns to Temple after working as an assistant coach on both sides of the ball from 2006-2011 under both Golden and Addazio.

Rhule has also has coaching stops at Western Carolina, UCLA, Buffalo and Albright College. He was a linebacker at Penn State in his playing days, earning All-Big Ten honors as a senior in 1997. For insight into Temple football and what the Owls will have to address this spring we

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turned to Mike Gibson from Templefootballforever.com .

A poll on his web site indicates that 90% of Temple fans that voted were more than happy to see Addazio make the move up the coaching ladder with his move to BC and the ACC.

Offense

The Owls only lose one full-time starter, running back Montel Harris on the offensive side of the ball. Their only other offensive loss is tackle Martin Wallace. Harris rushed for 1,054 yards on 186 carries (5.7) and 12 touchdowns in 2012. He tallied 351 yards and an amazing seven touchdowns in Temple's 63-32 win over Army.

"Without question Harris (is Temple's most significant loss," Gibson said. "(He) will follow Bernard Pierce (current Baltimore Raven) into the NFL."

"Jamie Gilmore, who Rivals rated the No. 7 all-purpose back in the country after his senior (high school) year in Ocala, Fla, will probably slot into the Harris spot."

Gilmore rushed for just 65 yards on 20 attempts as a true freshman this past season. He was one of 14 freshmen to see action for the Owls in 2012. The 5'8" back's high-water game was 49 yards in the win over Army.

Defense

Temple has three defensive starters to replace on the defensive side of the ball heading into the spring. They are free safety Vaughn Carraway and defensive ends Marcus Green and John Youboty. Carraway's 69 tackles were the third-most for the Owls, while Youboty and Green combined for 79 tackles and 7.0 sacks last fall.

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The two defensive ends are expected to be replaced by Sean Daniels and Sean Boyle, who played in 11 and seven respective games this past season. Boyle was a senior in 2012, but Gibson says he is expected to receive a medical redshirt after suffering a shoulder injury.

“If Boyle’s shoulder holds up and he makes it by Notre Dame he will have started both the 2009 opener against Villanova and the 2013 opener against Notre Dame,” Gibson offered.

Special Teams

The Owls also lose Big East Special Teams Player of the Year Matt Brown. He set a school record with 227 yards in Temple’s 42-17 loss to eventual Big East champion Louisville. Brown led the Big East in 2012 with 143.4 all-purpose yards per game.

Intriguing Spring Battles

Temple had two quarterbacks see extensive action during the past 4-7 campaign. Clinton “Juice” Granger was recruited by outgoing Temple head coach Addazio and was the starter for the last two games of the regular season against Army (a win) and Syracuse (a loss).

He and the quarterback he split time with last season, Chris Coyer, will both be seniors in 2013. Where things get interesting is the fact that Coyer – the 2011 New Mexico Bowl MVP – was recruited by new head coach Matt Rhule when he was still Temple’s recruiting coordinator prior to leaving for his brief stint with the Giants.

Granger passed for just 370 yards and two touchdowns in seven games last season, but he ran for 206 yards and a TD. Meanwhile, Coyer threw for 946 yards and eight touchdowns and was Temple’s second-leading rusher with 444 yards and two touchdowns while starting Temple’s first nine games. Coyer threw four interceptions, while Granger had two.

While Coyer did not throw many interceptions, he did have a fumbling problem that led to

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Granger taking over. However, injury was a factor as well.

“It was discovered after the season that Coyer played the season with a broken right hand,” Gibson said. “(He was) taking one for the team, so that probably had a lot to do with his turnovers.” Gibson believes the hand will be healed by the time spring practice begins.

Coyer redshirted in 2009 and has 13 career starts to his credit. Granger is a Philadelphia native who spent two years at a California junior college before coming back to his hometown. He was granted a redshirt as well after playing in just one game in 2011.

Coaching Staff

Gibson noted the hire of Rhule was given a “solid A-minus” by Sports Illustrated. Rhule spent three of his last four seasons as a Temple assistant at the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. He was also the program’s recruiting coordinator in his one season as an Addazio assistant. His hire continues continuity in the program that reached unprecedented heights before Golden left for Miami.

Rhule’s last recruiting class was ranked No. 1 in the MAC and helped in Temple’s transition to the Big East. The 37-year old was co-offensive coordinator for the Owls’ 2011 New Mexico Bowl team, which earned the program’s first bowl win since 1979.

Included on Rhule’s new coaching staff is defensive coordinator Phil Snow, who has been a college defensive coordinator in previous stops at Boise State, Arizona, UCLA, Washington, and Eastern Michigan.

“In his 72 games as a DC he’s held FBS opponents to single digits only three times,” Gibson noted of the 57-year old veteran. A notable member of Snow’s defensive staff is NFL veteran Brandon Noble. The former Washington Redskin and Dallas Cowboys defensive end was a college teammate of Rhule’s at Penn State.

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Ed Foley will serve as Rhule's assistant head coach. Foley adds consistency in the program and is entering his sixth season at Temple. He has previously worked as the director of football operations (last two years) and as the recruiting coordinator, tight ends and assistant offensive line coach.