



WASHINGTON REDSKINS

NOVA SPORTS PERFORMANCE CENTER AT REDSKINS PARK – LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA.

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PRESS RELEASE

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REDSKINS NAME STEVE RUSS AS LINEBACKERS COACH

LOUDOUN COUNTY, Va. – The Washington Redskins announced today that they have named Steve Russ as linebackers coach.

Russ is entering his third NFL season after spending the 2018-19 seasons as the Carolina Panthers linebackers coach. Along with his two NFL seasons, Russ has had a variety of coaching roles at the collegiate level, including stints with Air Force (2012-17), Wake Forest (2008-11), Syracuse (2005-07) and Ohio (2001-04).

Russ headed a linebacker unit in 2019 that was led by seven-time Pro Bowler and five-time First Team All-Pro selection Luke Kuechly. Kuechly finished fourth in the league with 144 total tackles while Shaq Thompson added 109. Kuechly also added 12 pass defenses, which was tied for the most in the league among linebackers.

Under Russ' tutelage in 2018, Kuechly recorded 130 tackles, eighth most in the NFL according to press box stats and 20 tackles for loss, a new career high and tied for third in the league. Kuechly earned Pro Bowl honors and was named AP First-Team All Pro.

Prior to joining Carolina, Russ spent six seasons (2012- 17) at Air Force as the assistant head coach, including four (2014-17) as the defensive coordinator and defensive backfield coach. Russ served as co-defensive coordinator from 2012-13, coaching the inside linebackers in 2013 and secondary in 2012. In 2017, the Air Force defense led the Mountain West Conference against the pass, allowing just 171.1 yards per game, a mark that ranked 10th nationally. The unit also ranked second in the conference and 14th in the country in opponent first downs.

In 2016, Russ' defensive unit ranked 10th nationally in rushing defense and 33rd in total defense. He coached defensive back Weston Steelhammer to three first-team all-conference selections, an Academy first, and to a pair of All-American honors in 2016. Steelhammer also earned the East-West Shrine Bowl Pat Tillman Award for leadership and citizenship.

In 2014, Russ' first season as the Falcons' sole defensive coordinator, Air Force improved in all four major categories, including a nation-best 15.8 points per game improvement to 24.2 allowed per game, moving 72 spots higher in the national rankings (33rd) than the previous season. The Falcons also improved in rushing, passing and total defense, including a more than 100-yard improvement in rushing defense to 135.6 yards per game. Air Force led the nation by improving from 119th nationally in 2013 to 28th in 2014, a 91-spot jump.

Russ came to Air Force, his alma mater, from Wake Forest where he spent four seasons (2008-11). Russ coached tight ends and fullbacks in his first two seasons before moving to the defensive side of the ball, coaching linebackers in 2010 and the secondary in 2011. Wake's punt coverage team, which Russ coordinated, led the nation in punt return defense, allowing just nine yards all season in 2008. When he took over the secondary in 2011, the Wake defense showed dramatic improvement. From 2010 to 2011, the pass efficiency defense improved 56 spots nationally, the third-down defense improved 52 spots and the scoring defense improved 45 spots.

In 2011, Russ coached safety Josh Bush to first-team All-ACC and third-team AP All-America honors. Bush was drafted in the sixth round by the New York Jets. Russ coached Merrill Noel, who was named the ACC Defensive Rookie of the Year and was a Freshman All-American by numerous publications as he led the country in pass break-ups.

Russ also coached at Syracuse (2005-07) where he led linebackers in 2005 and 2006, before being promoted to defensive coordinator in 2007. While at Syracuse, Russ coached linebacker Kelvin Smith, a seventh-round draft pick in 2007 by the Miami Dolphins. He also coached linebackers as an assistant at Ohio (2001-04), coaching alongside current Panthers defensive coordinator Eric Washington. Russ began his coaching career at Air Force as a graduate assistant strength coach in 1995.

While playing at Air Force, Russ earned second-team All-WAC honors in 1994 and was selected to play in both the Blue-Gray All-Star game and the East-West Shrine game following his senior season. Russ received Air Force's Brian Bullard Award, which is the program's highest honor, in 1994 and was a seventh-round draft pick of the Denver Broncos in the 1995 NFL Draft. He was just the fifth player in Air Force history to be drafted in the NFL.

Following two years of active service in the military, Russ joined the Broncos and spent four seasons (1997-2000) with the team, and he was a part of Denver's 1997 and 1998 Super Bowl Championship teams. He played in 24 career games as a linebacker and on special teams.

RUSS FOOTBALL TIMELINE

2018-19: Linebackers Coach, Carolina Panthers
2014-17: Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator, Air Force
2012-13: Assistant Head Coach/Co-offensive Coordinator, Air Force
2011: Defensive Backs Coach, Wake Forest
2010: Linebackers Coach, Wake Forest
2008-09: Tight Ends/Fullbacks Coach, Wake Forest
2007: Defensive Coordinator, Syracuse
2005-06: Linebackers Coach, Syracuse
2001-04: Linebackers Coach, Ohio
1997-00: Linebacker, Denver Broncos
1991-94: Linebacker, Air Force

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ABOUT THE REDSKINS: Headquartered at Inova Sports Performance Center at Redskins Park in Ashburn, Virginia, and owned by [Daniel Snyder](#), the historic Washington Redskins Football Club has won five World Championship titles including the 1937 and 1942 National Football League Championship games, as well as Super Bowls XVII, XXII and XXVI. Founded in 1932 as the Boston Braves in Massachusetts, the team changed its name to the Redskins in 1933 and relocated to Washington, D.C. in 1937. Since then, the team has become one of the most recognizable professional sports franchises in history, featuring multiple Hall of Fame coaches, 19 members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame (with 11 others who also were Redskins) and becoming the first team in the NFL with an official marching band and fight song, "Hail to the Redskins." The Redskins have been owned by [Dan Snyder](#) since 1999, and beginning in 1997, began playing their home games at FedExField in Landover, Md.

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