

# New game plan:

From calling plays under the Friday night lights to working skills under the sweltering summer heat, new head football coach Todd Ford will be leading the leopards both on the field, around campus and in the community with a big impact.

"[I am] very impressed with his detailed approach to coaching. I've watched him for two days now and he definitely has a detailed plan for success. The players have really responded well to his style of coaching," athletic administrator, Jim Bob Puckett, said.

Coach Todd Ford's first day was Wednesday, Jan. 27. Since then, Ford has begun the process of evaluating all of the football players and also the current staff. Ford also brought some coordinators that will also be evaluated and interviewed by Athletic Director, J.B. Puckett to see if they have a spot here at Lovejoy.

Although Ford is not native to North Texas, he does have experience in the area and was excited to return and work at a school as recognized as Lovejoy.

"First and foremost the academic setting here is what obviously first and foremost (is what caught my attention). Secondly, I've come from previous jobs where the community had very high expectations, and I have found those to be really really rewarding, and so the community expectation piece here is awesome, and I feel like this is a great place.

"There's just places that you get the feel, the vibe that it has the potential to be special, and those are probably I would say my top three reasons," said Ford.

Before Ford was introduced to Lovejoy, he was known for his achievements. Ford was a former University of Texas quarterback and graduate, lettering in football. Also as an offensive coordinator for the University of North Texas, he has a mental model of what it takes to win state championships after recently charging into playoffs over the last three years. Ford was also an area finalist this past fall while at Cedar Ridge located in Round Rock. Because of his wives family and relatives, Ford worked in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex for 12-13 years, and he also worked in the Austin area for five or six.

"He's won at the highest level. He's been a college coach before too so he was part of the run southlake carroll had when they went forty-eight and 0, so I think he'll be a good addition to Lovejoy athletics," high school football coach and seventh-grade Texas history teacher, Cody Alexander

# Lovejoy introduces new head football coach, Todd Ford

said.

"Todd is an excellent fit to be our next Head Football Coach. He is a man of integrity exemplifies strong football knowledge, and owns a proven track record of leading successful football programs," Superintendent Ted Moore, said in the email to parents and the community in announcing plans to hire Ford with the board of trustees approval.

With Ford being a "family man with integrity," he brings his own aspects to the program.

"Anytime you're ever around our team, we will always come together, and we will break it out with the word family. It's something that's personal to



"...I really try hard to stay focused on today, and I really really am thinking recently about what tomorrow can bring." -Todd Ford

me, it's something that is very important to me, and we just don't give the word 'family' lip service. A lot of people say family, but we really try to apply that to anything and everything that we do," Ford said.

"We care about the kids that we coach. We take pride in doing things the right way. Now, we hold them to high expectations, we are going to hold them to high standards, but we feel like that at the end of the day, they're going to be a better person because they have come through our program, and ultimately, they're going to have a great understanding of what the word 'family' means in the long run."

Although he has worked with college-level athletes, Ford returned to working with young men in high school, and many current eighth-graders will be graduating into the high-school football program and will be working with Ford.

"Watching a young player start our program as a

freshmen and see the transition and changing that takes place by the time they're a senior. And, watching them grow, watching them mature, watching them develop and change into a young man is one of tremendous satisfaction, and that part is really really cool," Ford said.

While many coaches have big dreams, goals, and hopes for their teams, Todd Ford tries to take it day by day, little by little, so that their players can grow to be great so that titles will come with that.

"Simply put, our football program has two goals: to win the district championship and to practice on Thanksgiving, and so we feel like winning a district championship is really a honor, and so we're going to set that up there. If we can practice on Thanksgiving that's a special thing for our community, for our players just because there's not that many teams left if you can get to Thanksgiving, and then if you can win it, then you have an opportunity to ultimately win a championship."

Many coaches, players and communities have dreams for what they want their team to be. With the leopard football program already have had making it into the second round of the playoffs, football fans are ready and excited to see what tricks Ford has up his sleeve.

"...Ultimately we're bringing a football program and instilling it to our kids, to our community that is one that is very very successful, and all it takes is buy in from our players and from our community, and if they're willing to work hard by the time they finish their senior year, they're going to be excellent college students, ultimately, good fathers, good parents, and realistically they should be pretty productive in society," said Ford.

-Madeline Sanders, Editor-in-Chief, Grace Nguyen, Sports Editor, and Carter Satterwhite, Staff Writer. photo by zoe allison