

Hardin-Simmons alum fulfills missionary calling as coach

August 20, 2019

PLANO—Early in life, Rusty Oglesby felt God's calling to become a missionary. After his experiences as a student athlete at Hardin-Simmons University, he became convinced his mission is to shape young lives as a coach.

Today, Oglesby not only is a football and soccer coach and teacher at John Paul II High School in Plano, but also general manager of a semi-professional soccer team, the Denton Diablos.

Oglesby was a tri-sport athlete at Abilene High School before registering at Hardin-Simmons. He attended HSU from 1993 to 1997, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

At Hardin-Simmons, he played football under Coach Jimmie Keeling four seasons. He also worked on HVAC maintenance on campus, attended college worship services at University Baptist Church and was involved with youth programs through Calvary Baptist Church, where his father preached.

Freshman All American at HSU



Rusty Oglesby kicked off the first football game in the newly constructed Shelton Stadium at Hardin-Simmons University in 1993. (HSU Archival Photo)

During his first football season at HSU, Oglesby kicked off the first game in newly constructed Shelton Stadium.

“Of course, we won the conference championship in 1993, but 100 other guys did that. I am the only one who will ever get to be the first to touch the ball in the first game at Shelton Stadium,” Oglesby said. That same year, he was named HSU’s only freshman All American.

Oglesby now is the varsity boys’ soccer head coach and the varsity football offensive coordinator at John Paul II High School, where he also teaches personal finance. For the last five years, he also has worked as a certified real estate agent in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.



Rusty Oglesby is general manager of the semi-professional Denton Diablos soccer team. He is pictured with Tobias Lopez, general manager of the Fort Worth Vaqueros. Both are Hardin-Simmons University alumni. (Photo courtesy of Rusty Oglesby via HSU)

His role with the Diablos is more of a weekend gig, he explained, which comes to a head during the summer months when the soccer season kicks off.

Oglesby has served as general manager of the Denton Diablos since the club's inception and "was an integral part of our inaugural season's success," co-owner Damon Gochneaur noted.

Coaching as a calling

Oglesby views coaching as a calling.

“From a young age, I knew I was called to be a missionary. I thought, after going to HSU and playing football for Coach Keeling, there was no better mission than being a high school coach,” Oglesby said.

Oglesby coached at four high schools before arriving at John Paul II in 2017. Over the years, he has led his soccer teams to the 2010 UIL State Championship, the 2014 State Semifinals and the 2016 State Finals, and he was named United Soccer Coaches State Coach of the Year in 2016.



Coach Rusty Oglesby and his wife Cory are pictured with daughter Chassiti and son Cutter. (Photo courtesy of Rusty Oglesby via HSU)

He also racked up a long list of awards in his time as a coach, including the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches Region 2 Coach of the Year in 2010, 2014 and 2016, as well as District Coach of the Year eight times between 2000 and 2016.

Oglesby remains busy outside of work as the father to two adult children and a baby due late this year. Each day, he said, he asks himself, "What can I do to better myself, to better my family, and leave a legacy for my kids?"

He remains motivated by "knowing that we are called to be fishers of men and we are called to be leaders," he said.

"Hardin-Simmons gave me the opportunity to hone that skill," he added.