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NU SOFTBALL ASSISTANT STEPS UP AFTER HEAD COACH'S SUDDEN RESIGNATION

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By Kelly Grant

Photo by Luke Pamer



The Northwest University softball team members were informed of head coach John Bacon's surprise resignation January 15th. Mallory Tacdol has been hired as the interim coach for this season.

Tacdol acknowledged the good and bad timing of Bacon's resignation. While it did occur in the middle of the season, they had about one month to adjust before their first game February 8th.

Tacdol is a student at NU and has served as the assistant coach for the past year. Tacdol was a star catcher at Division One University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND for three years before transferring to Northwest University for her senior season.

Janey Ganta, a junior right fielder for NU, said Bacon's resignation was out of the blue.

"We had no idea that anything like this was going on and we were just really sad and disappointed that we never really got to talk to him to say goodbye," said Hannah Yelas, a freshman pitcher for NU.

Gary McIntosh, the Director of Athletics at NU, said the process for finding a new coach is different when one is needed on short notice. "When it happens so quickly," he said, "you always start with someone in the program. If it had happened over the summer, we may have done a national search."

Tacdol said she is interested in applying for the head coach position once the opportunity is made available after the end of the season.

"I care about the girls on the team and how the program will grow," Tacdol said. "The program needs someone who has its best intentions."

Ganta said Tacdol is a good fit because of her experience with the team; she knows the team dynamic and the players as individuals. "She is our biggest fan and our biggest critic," said Ganta.

Yelas said that although she is sure the players would be thrilled to have Tacdol come back as head coach, they don't want to hold her back from anything she wants to do.

Since the change, the team has been adapting while continuing to prepare for their season. Tacdol said the team has been positive and flexible, making it an easy transition.

Ganta and Yelas agree this change has brought their team closer together and they will only improve.

According to Yelas, the players are forced to take a greater leadership role. "It's not that we're playing for a coach and what he wants us to do," she said. "It's like we're working hard because we want to be successful – not just because the coach is telling us to do

something.

"We definitely have taken ownership of the season more," Yelas said. "This has just led us to realize that we really have to take care of each other and we're here to rise and fall together and not just stand alone."

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