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Quinn Balances Bulls, Bearcats

Gannett News Service - Dec 23rd, 2009

New University at Buffalo football coach Jeff Quinn might be asking for a road map and a compass as gifts this holiday season, but the best present of all might be something he could pick up at his old job: a victory in the Allstate Sugar Bowl.

Quinn was introduced as Bulls coach Tuesday, replacing Turner Gill. But while he has landed his first head coaching job, Quinn remains the interim coach for No. 4 Cincinnati and will guide the Bearcats (12-0) in the Sugar Bowl against defending national champion Florida (12-1) on New Year's Day.

At his news conference in Buffalo, Quinn joked that he's wearing four hats – Buffalo head coach and Bearcats interim coach, as well as Cincinnati's offensive coordinator and line coach. "It's been quite challenging," he said. "I've had very little sleep but a lot of support."

The Bearcats lost head coach Brian Kelly to Notre Dame and last week hired Central Michigan's Butch Jones to replace him. But Quinn was named interim coach when Kelly left, has been conducting practices and will keep that title through the Sugar Bowl – after which he and Jones will settle into their new positions.

Coaching shakeups often affect bowl games, but to have such comings and goings before a Bowl Championship Series game is unusual.

"The success we've had this season had been overshadowed by the other stuff," Bearcats quarterback Tony Pike told The Cincinnati Enquirer. "I've been impressed by how the guys have locked in."

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