

## NEWS RELEASE

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# USM Head Football Coach Named 2005 KCAC Coach of the Year



(Leavenworth, Kan.)— For just the second time in team history, the University of Saint Mary football program has a conference coach of the year.

On Nov. 21, USM head football coach Lance Hinson was named the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference (KCAC) co-coach of the year for 2005. In just his first season as head coach, Hinson led the Spires to a 5-5 mark, and a school record four-game winning streak. The Spires' five wins also ties the school record for most wins in a season set in 2002.

"It's always nice to be recognized for your work, whether it's a pat on the back from your boss, or recognition from your peers," Hinson said. "I think this was a very nice gesture from the rest of the conference."

Hinson has been with USM since 2002, spending the previous two years as defensive coordinator and linebackers coach. In addition to his head coaching responsibilities this season, Hinson also served as the Spires' defensive coordinator, leading the Spires to the seventh-ranked total defense in the nation. The top-notch defense also produced two first-team and one second-team All-KCAC athletes for 2005. In total, 11 players from Hinson's club earned KCAC post season honors.

The five-win season comes after the Spires were picked by conference peers to finish last in the preseason. Despite the five-win season, Hinson's choice for conference coach of the year was the person he shared the honor with—Tabor College's Mike Gardner. Gardner led Tabor to a perfect 10-0 season and a top 10 ranking in the National Athletic Intercollegiate Association (NAIA) national poll.

"I thought he deserved to be coach of the year. I think he did an awesome job," Hinson said. "To be recognized like this, though, was very nice."

Hinson took the reigns as interim head football coach in August. Soon after a very successful season, he was offered the head coach position, which he accepted.

"Lance has done an excellent job since he's been at Saint Mary. He's earned this honor," USM Athletic Director, Darrell Phipps said. "We look forward to a bright future for the Spires football program."

Visit [www.stmary.edu](http://www.stmary.edu) to learn more about Hinson and the USM Spires football season.

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