

Bono adds Reader and McDonough to coaching staff

Pair of NCAA champions become newest additions to Wisconsin program

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin wrestling program added two NCAA champions to its staff on Monday, as head coach Chris Bono announced the hiring of Jon Reader and Matt McDonough as assistant coaches.

Reader, an assistant coach at South Dakota State since 2014, follows Bono to Madison after a successful stint in Brookings that included coaching 20 national qualifiers, five All-Americans and a national champion in Seth Gross.

“First and foremost, Jon is a great person. He’s well respected within the whole wrestling world,” Bono said. “He treats people the way they’re supposed to be treated and that’s going to be the basis of this program, bringing in good people who treat people the way they’re supposed to be treated.

Number two, he’s a tireless worker. His work ethic in all areas of his life is just off the charts. His relationships around the country with coaches and kids are just unbelievable, so recruiting is just his forte and he loves to do it. Then, you let him get inside the room with the kids and he works out every single day and he can work with them every single day. He’s a great technician. Overall, he’s probably the hottest assistant coach in the country right now.”

Reader played an integral role in helping SDSU qualify seven wrestlers for the 2017-18 NCAA Championships, the most in school history. Of those seven NCAA qualifiers, three became All-Americans and one claimed the program’s first national championship.

“Our mentalities are the exact same and he became family right away,” Bono added of Reader. “He hit it out of the ballpark as an assistant coach at SDSU. When we got our opportunity to come here to Wisconsin, he could have stayed and been the guy at SDSU, but he jumped with me and took a leap of faith and said this is the best thing for all of us. We’re so excited that he came with me.”

Reader earned 124 career victories during his collegiate career at Iowa State, where he became a three-time All-American and 2011 NCAA Champion at 174 pounds.

Reader will not be the only national champion on staff. McDonough will also coach the Badgers as an assistant after winning two NCAA titles of his own at 125 pounds as a freshman and junior at Iowa.

“When I first got the job at SDSU, I tried to hire him six years ago when he was fresh out of college and winning national championships at Iowa,” Bono said of McDonough. “It’s the mentality of the work ethic and how he’s thinking. We’re on the same page for how we should train athletes and how the recruiting goes.

“Everything about Matt is what I think about in a wrestling program, so it was a no-brainer to go after him. He comes very highly recommended by a lot of people and I’m excited to get him here.”

McDonough was a three-time All-American for the Hawkeyes and ended his illustrious career with 122 wins. He also won back-to-back Big Ten titles as a sophomore and junior. In international competition, he earned a bronze medal for Team USA in Hungary.

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“We’re all on the same page already. I know the work ethic of those two guys and I know my work ethic and I know our philosophy,” Bono said. “They know how I think, they know what kind of a guy I am and it’s almost like getting together with family. Everything just clicks.”

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