

# Person charged in deaths of Broncos' RB coach's parents

By Mike Klis

9 News

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A Sherman County, Texas grand jury has indicted Anthony Dewayne Buck of Dalhart, Texas on two counts of manslaughter in the fatal accident involving the parents of Denver Broncos running backs coach Eric Stutesville.

The accident occurred on June 4, 2013 in Sherman County. According to the police report, Alfonso Stutesville, 67, and his wife Janet Stutesville, 68, of Madison, Wisc. were riding a motorcycle along U.S. Highway 54 when an 18-wheeler driven by Buck veered into their lane and struck the Honda Goldwing motorcycle head on. The Stutesvilles were pronounced dead at the scene.

Buck faces two to 20 years in prison for each count in the indictment. His case will be heard in the 69th District Court of Sherman County. His next court appearance has not yet been scheduled. Buck was released on a surety bond, although he is currently being held in Dallam-Hartley County (Texas) Jail on unrelated charges of drug paraphernalia possession and burglary of habitation.

"The biggest thing for our family as we've gone through this process is to find out the truth about the crash," Stutesville said. "And to have a day in court where whoever is responsible is held accountable. There have been a lot of people who have helped me through this and been so supportive. Our family, obviously, friends. The Madison, Wisc. community, the Broncos' organization. At the end of the day we just want to get to the truth about what happened and make sure justice is served whatever that is."

Stutesville is considered one of the best running backs coaches in the NFL. This is his 19th season in the league, and 15th as a running back coach. He's spent six of those last 15 years with the Broncos. He has coached the likes of Marshawn Lynch, Tiki Barber, Willis McGahee, Fred Jackson, C.J. Anderson and Ronnie Hillman.

In 2010, Stutesville became the first African-American head coach in Broncos history when he succeeded Josh McDaniels for the final four games of the season.

# Q&A with Eric Stutesville

By David DeChant  
DenverBroncos.com  
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Late in his second season with the Broncos, Eric Stutesville went from running backs coach to the interim head coach for the final four games of the season. Now in his fifth year with the team, Stutesville detailed what the head coaching experience was like and how his current group of backs has tweaked the way he approaches coaching.

## **You played defensive back in college and coached predominantly defense in college. How did you move to the other side of the ball?**

"I think it was just an opportunity. They had a space open and I started working with Matt Cavanaugh, who was the offensive coordinator in Chicago at the time. It was just an opportunity to learn more football, more of the other side of the ball. It was a great experience in that sometimes you get caught up thinking you know the most about your side of the ball and then when you get to the other side, you realize you may not have known as much as you thought you did, like why the offense was doing certain things. It was good to be on that side and I just loved it. I kind of gravitated toward it, being on the offensive side, and it's been good."

## **You've continued to coach running backs since then. Why?**

"Well I mean I think it's just that when I moved to offense in Chicago with the Bears in my first year there, I just jumped in and started doing that and that's kind of where I spent most of my time and all of a sudden you look up and you're still there and you're still doing that and working on getting better at that. I've always tried to focus on being really good at where I am and not looking around or wishing I was doing something else. I love where I am and what I'm doing, so I just stayed here. It's good."

## **You came here in 2010 and within two years in Denver, you were the interim head coach. What was that experience like? Did it happen fast?**

"Yes, the experience was fast. That four weeks was a tremendous learning experience for me, but it was humbling that Mr. Bowlen and Joe Ellis, in such a short period of time, had the confidence in me to do that for four weeks."

## **Did it surprise you that suddenly you were in charge of the football team? How do you react to something like that?**

"Incredibly surprised. I didn't really have time to react. There was so much that we had to do right away. Any time there's a transition period like that, there wasn't time to do anything other than to get down to work. We still had four games to play, we had opponents upcoming. I had a tremendous staff. The staff that was here was fantastic. They jumped in and helped and did everything. Everybody pulled their own weight, the players and all the support staff, everybody was fantastic. But we still had four games to play so we had work to do, so there wasn't a lot of down time to just enjoy that particular position other than we had work to do."

**Looking back now at that experience, does it change your perspective as a position coach?**

"I think every experience you have changes you in some way. It certainly made me appreciate how much head coaches have on their plate. It made me appreciate how valuable assistant coaches are. Really our job is to do our job and really to help the head coach and make sure we're pulling our weight. So all those things I think. It solidified more thoughts in my mind about philosophies and things like that than anything else."

**The group you have here this year is very young, very versatile. Has this been a different experience for you without a veteran in the room?**

"It has. It has been different, but it's been really good. It's in some ways kind of rejuvenated me and forced me to go back and teach everything from the beginning: the basics and the fundamentals and how I see things and how I think we should do things and not take the little things for granted. The idea that, 'Oh this is a guy, he knows this, he's done this before.' I can't do that right now. But every one of these guys that's in the room has really bought in and come to work and really committed themselves to trying to get better every day when they come out here and it's a credit to the men in that room."

**You've gotten contributions from several different backs this year. Is that something you expected and how proud are you of players stepping up?**

"You know I think there's really probably two parts to that answer. One is that I'm very proud of all of them because we talk in our room about the opportunity and being prepared when that opportunity comes and then going out and performing. I think everyone that's been put in that position to perform has grasped that opportunity and made the most of it, whether that's Montee, whether that's Ronnie when he came in, and now C.J., and we expect that from anybody else that lines up in there. But that's also kind of the expectation. The expectation is that our preparation is critical to getting ready for the opportunity."

**It seems like running backs have to really be jacks-of-all-trades. How do you refine the supplementary parts of their game?**

“There’s unique things that go into a running back and one of the great things about being a running back, I think in coaching them, is that you’re involved in all aspects of the game. You’re involved not only in running the ball, but you’re involved in pass protection and receiving and running routes, blocking perhaps in the run game. So I just think it takes an overall well-rounded football player to be a really good running back. But whether you’re an undrafted free agent or you’re a high draft pick, you’ve got to be able to figure out how to do all things and be a well-rounded guy. And I think that’s what I try to coach them to do and that’s what I try to push them to do.”

# Studesville Ties Bind Super RBs Moreno, Lynch

By Andrew Mason  
DenverBroncos.com  
January 28, 2014

Independent analyst Andrew Mason examines the role running backs coach Eric Studesville played in mentoring both Knowshon Moreno and Marshawn Lynch.

NEWARK, N.J. -- Knowshon Moreno regards running backs coach Eric Studesville as "like a father figure."

That's apt, because it would be impossible for any father to be prouder than Studesville of what he will witness Sunday night: two teams with prolific running backs that he helped develop.

Before Studesville joined the Broncos and inherited a running back corps that included a then-22-year-old Moreno, he coached the Buffalo Bills' running backs for six seasons. For the last three of them, his prize pupil was Marshawn Lynch, the Bills' 2007 first-round draft pick.

Lynch had a pair of 1,000-yard seasons playing under Studesville, but that's not what stands out to the veteran coach. Instead, it's the bond of friendship that they had -- and still possess.

"When I had him every day, you loved being around him every day," Studesville said. "He's got a great personality, he's got a huge heart."

That's not something that many people outside the locker room have seen, given Lynch's reluctance to speak with media. He spoke at the Seahawks' media day session for just six minutes and 20 seconds before leaving, which could subject him to a second fine this month for not being available for interviews.

Having worked with Lynch on a daily basis for nearly three years, Studesville sees beneath the on-the-record silence.

"I can just tell you what he is around me," Studesville said. "He's a big kid and when we lived in Buffalo, he was at my house, because he lived two doors up, so he was welcome there any time, and we loved having him, and he's fun to be around, and just a good person."

Bringing out the best in a running back is Studesville's specialty. The results have never been more obvious than this year: Only three running backs and four players

had more yardage from scrimmage in the 2013 season than his current and former pupils, Moreno (1,591) and Lynch (1,573).

These successes make them the latest in a line of prolific running backs who can trace part of their development and stellar performance to Stutesville, who broke into the NFL via the minority coaching internship with the Chicago Bears in 1996.

But Stutesville takes just as much pride in his players' development as individuals. And perhaps none of his runners has ever traveled farther than Moreno, who came under Stutesville's watch in 2010.

"The distance he has covered has been amazing. Amazing," said Stutesville. "And I'm very proud of him and the adjustments that he's made, that he's learned from things that have happened.

"To see where he is standing today, and reaping the rewards of that hard work to do those things, it's awesome. It makes you very proud to see somebody who really looked at things and said, 'You know what? I'm going to do things differently,' and has done them differently."

Even a torn anterior cruciate ligament did not derail Moreno. When he suffered the injury at Kansas City on Nov. 13, 2011, the timing seemed cruel. He had just taken over for a hurting Willis McGahee, and ran with decisiveness and authority that he had never before shown in the NFL, slicing through -- and in one case over -- a flailing defense.

Then Moreno was injured, and didn't play again until the following year. But by this point, he had already begun to transform and mature under Stutesville's guidance. That served him well in the rehabilitation.

"You're sick for him, because you know how hard he's working to try to do this, but maybe the greater testimony is what he did after that, how he worked through all that and came back from it," Stutesville said. "(Moreno) was never negative, never down on himself, and was great to be around as a teammate, and did everything the right way."

And when a reporter mentions to Stutesville that Moreno calls him a "father figure," the coach is clearly moved.

"That's a tremendous compliment, because I'm very proud of where he is and how far he has come in his journey," he said. "It's great to sit and look at him and watch that development -- as you would any player, whether it's their skills or their personal life or things like that, you're proud when you know that they're better today than when you first met him."

That's why Moreno and Lynch have risen to the pinnacle of their profession. Studeville brought out their best, and the conference champions have reaped the rewards.

# **Knowshon Moreno, Eric Stutesville awarded Ed Block Courage Foundation recognition**

By Joan Niesen  
The Denver Post  
December 6, 2013

The Broncos announced Friday that they've selected running back Knowshon Moreno as their 2013 Ed Block Courage Award winner. Running backs coach Eric Stutesville will also be recognized by the Ed Block Courage Foundation for overcoming personal adversity.

The Ed Block Courage Award is given to players who exemplify commitment to the principles of sportsmanship and courage. Moreno, after tearing his ACL in 2011 and injuring his knee in the Broncos' lone playoff game last season, has rebounded from his injuries to start all 12 games for the Broncos in 2013. On the season, he has 202 rushes for 842 yards and nine rushing touchdowns along with 42 catches for 414 yards and two receiving touchdowns.

Stutesville is being recognized for his perseverance in the months after suddenly losing his parents in June.

The Ed Block Courage Award is named for Ed Block, the longtime head athletic trainer of the Baltimore Colts, who was a pioneer in his profession and a respected humanitarian.

Teammates select the recipients of the award based on team effort as well as individual performance.

# Moreno, Studesville Earn Ed Block Courage Honors

By Brandon Moree  
DenverBroncos.com  
December 6, 2013

Running back Knowshon Moreno and Running Backs Coach Eric Studesville were both honored by the Ed Block Courage Foundation.

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. – For their courage in the face of adversity, both running back Knowshon Moreno and his position coach Eric Studesville will be honored by the Ed Block Courage Foundation.

Moreno was selected by the Broncos as the 2013 Ed Block Courage Award winner and Studesville is receiving special consideration from the foundation for his perseverance in the wake of the sudden and tragic loss of his parents Al and Jan in June.

Moreno was selected for the Ed Block Courage Award honoring players who exemplify commitments to the principles of sportsmanship and courage. He is being honored for his work coming back from an ACL tear in the 2011 season and another knee injury in the playoff game in January to ultimately start each game of the 2013 season to date and lead the team in rushing. In addition to his rushing yardage, he's also caught 42 passes for 414 yards and two touchdowns – putting him well over 1,200 yards of total offense.

Studesville is in his fourth season as the running backs coach for the Broncos and is lead a unit that has scored 14 touchdowns and registered more than 1,500 yards this season. That group includes rookie Montee Ball who just had the first 100-yard rushing game of his career in the win against Kansas City.

Moreno has been the leading force behind the Broncos' success on the ground this season. He ranks seventh among all NFL running backs with 1,256 yards from scrimmage and is tied for the league lead at his position with 11 touchdowns.

With his current numbers, Moreno is one of just five players to have more than 800 rushing and 400 receiving yards this season and he is on pace to become the franchise's first 1,000 yard rusher with 500 receiving yards.

The Ed Block Courage Award is named in honor of Ed Block, the longtime head athletic trainer of the Baltimore Colts, who was a pioneer in his profession and a

respected humanitarian. Recipients for the award are selected by their teammates for team effort as well as individual performance.

# Broncos assistant coach Eric Studesville product of great parents

By Terry Frei  
The Denver Post  
June 10, 2013

Al Studesville's voice boomed. His voice boomed because of his pipes — he could have done radio voice-overs — but also because of his charisma and aura of authority.

Born in St. Louis but a virtual lifelong Madison resident and a University of Wisconsin graduate, Al was a teacher, a counselor, a civic activist and, above all, a husband and a father.

Jan Studesville, his wife, founded and ran the Just Nails salon in the Madison suburb of Fitchburg. She also was vice president of Women in Focus, which works with minority students and provides \$2,000 scholarships.

When their son, Eric, was named the interim head coach of the Broncos after the firing of Josh McDaniels in late 2010, I called Al. We spoke at length for a Sunday profile of Eric, the running backs coach who was so respected, he was the logical choice to get the Broncos through the rest of a disastrous season. And he stayed on after John Fox's hiring.

Al told me about making Eric, a hockey left wing at age 10, pack up his gear in front of his teammates and at least temporarily give up the sport because Eric's grades had slipped ... slightly. There were other examples of stern father-knowsbest moments, all reflecting love, pride and perfectionism.

Then Al got to the time when Eric, a former football player at NCAA Division III Wisconsin-Whitewater, was a University of Arizona graduate student, on track for medical school. Missing football, he helped out as an Arizona volunteer assistant coach, and when Wildcats assistant Gerald Carr moved on to North Carolina, he talked Tar Heels coach Mack Brown into hiring Studesville as the program's video assistant.

Eric had to call Al and say: *Uh, Dad, about medical school ...*

The son said he wanted to give coaching a try. For five years. Then it would either be his career, or out of his system.

"I was not happy," Al said. "Typically, when I'm not happy, before I do or say anything stupid, I get in the car and go for a drive, or go for a little walk. This time, I went for a walk around the block."

After that walk, he called Eric back.

"I told him, 'I don't know a thing about what you're doing, or how it's going to work, but if that's what you want, you have my absolute support,' " Al said.

I was on vacation last week when I checked a phone message from Mile High Sports radio host Mark McIntosh, asking if I could come on the air to talk about the Studevilles. Not knowing I was out of town and out of touch, he understandably assumed I knew what had happened. I didn't. I could guess, though, from Mark's somber tone. A quick check of the Internet confirmed those fears.

While riding their Honda Goldwing in Texas on a vacation trip to the Grand Canyon, Al, 67, and Jan, 68, were killed when struck head-on by a tractor trailer that had crossed the center line.

Al worked for Wisconsin Power and Light for 18 years. After his job was eliminated, he became a teacher at Madison East High School, but never forgot that feeling of having a job pulled out from under him and used the experience to counsel others.

He was program director at the South Madison Neighborhood Center and since 1994 has been a counselor at Madison Area Technical College. Geraldo VilaCruz, associate dean at MATC, told Dan Simmons of the Wisconsin State Journal that Al worked with students trying to enter or, more important, get second chances in the workplace.

"When he talked with students, he told them about his own experiences and how possible it is to create different dreams and experiences," VilaCruz said. He said of Al's death: "This is a devastating loss for the college and the community at large. He was larger than life. He cared so much for students and staff."

He also helped found the 100 Black Men of Madison, a professional group, and was involved in so many other Madison civic activities, and won so many awards, I don't have room to list them all. In Madison, Al and Jan were *there* for so many.

Saturday in Madison, at MATC's Mitby Theater, a 2 p.m. service will honor the Studevilles. I smiled when I read this on the Cress Funeral Home website Sunday: "The family suggests that visitors wear attire to reflect a colorful celebration of life in the true spirit of Al and Jan."

# After turbulent week, Broncos interim coach Studesville is ready for Cards

By Terry Frei  
The Denver Post  
December 12, 2010

Eric Studesville was 10 years old and a standout hockey player in one of the sport's U.S. hotbeds, Madison — the home of the University of Wisconsin. His father, Al, a teacher at Madison's East High School, decided to make a point, to emphasize the nature of the pact between the young left winger and his parents.

"I made him pack up all his hockey stuff in front of the team and go in and turn it all in because his grades had slipped," Al recalled the other day. "I said, 'I told you, you could do all of this as long as your school is going good. School's not good? No sports!' "

Teammates and parents were up in arms. Wasn't this a bit extreme? One of their best players, a high-scoring, right-handed-shooting left wing, is yanked off the team over his still-decent grades?

Al Studesville didn't back down.

"After that, I never had a problem with Eric as a student ever, ever again," he said.

Young Eric returned to hockey the next season, but within a couple years pared it from his crowded schedule.

"Hockey was 65 games and 60 practices a year," Al said. "And then Eric came to me and said, 'Dad, I'm thinking of getting into the drum-and-bugle corps too.' I said, 'Sit down, I need you to make some choices here.' "

By the time he was at Verona High School, just outside Madison, Eric was wedging in football, basketball and tennis. Hockey had lost a winger, but Studesville was on a path that would lead him to become an NFL assistant coach, and last week, to add the label as Broncos interim head coach after the firing of Josh McDaniels.

The beginning of Studesville's four-game audition comes today at Arizona. While the chances seem slim of Studesville, 43, landing the position as McDaniels' successor, he has already helped lift the mood around Dove Valley. The dynamism and upbeat attitude that left him untainted in the team's coaching turf wars made him the logical choice to step up to the interim head coaching job down the stretch of a lost season. It might not be wise to rule out a man who 20 years ago had no intention of going into coaching when he enrolled in graduate school at the University of Arizona.

Whitewater was a good fit

In Madison, a university and state capital community, young Eric dived into academic and sporting pursuits. His parents, Al and Janet, were blunt about their standards, long before that hockey embargo.

"I'm glad it was like that," Eric said at the Broncos' headquarters last week. "Even if you don't achieve everything you're trying for, you're striving. It was grades, grades, grades, but the real mantra in my life was effort. That's what I still have today. The root of what my dad wanted was your best at all times — and whatever your best was, he was going to be fine with that."

As a senior for the Verona Wildcats, Studesville was a 5-foot-11, 185-pound linebacker. No major-college program wanted him. His parents, both UW-Madison alumni, lobbied him to attend the hometown university, where he at best would be a walk-on football player as he pursued what then were his plans to become a doctor.

Al also was a close friend of Wisconsin athletic director Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch. But only 40 miles away, the coaching staff at Division III national power Wisconsin-Whitewater offered an alternative, recruiting him as a defensive back.

"I went down there to visit and just felt comfortable," Eric said. "I had to battle my dad a little bit because he wasn't too excited about that, but as with all things with him, he allowed me to state my case."

Al gave in.

Bob Berezowitz, now retired, was the Warhawks' coach.

"We've had people who have graduated from Whitewater and then gone on to medical school at UW-Madison," Berezowitz said. "So we kind of used that to entice him to come to Whitewater."

"Being a D3 school, we knew that if he was bigger and a little faster, he might have been someplace else. But Eric had that work ethic you can't instill in people. He ended up a three-year starter for us and an all-conference player for us. He didn't have that outright blazing speed, but he was smart and you could always count on him to be at the right place at the right time. And he was a great leader from the day he walked on the campus."

The Warhawks' quarterback was Lance Leipold, now the school's head coach who has his team in the Division III national playoffs. "He was a very physical corner for us because of his linebacking days," Leipold said, "but he was very cerebral at the same time. He anticipated and read things well."

Leipold and Studesville became closer because, with teammate Jerry Wilcox, they worked together on a three-man crew hired to do maintenance and painting at Whitewater's stadium one summer.

"We probably did more laughing than working," Leipold said. The three have remained close through the years, and Leipold said that the support he got from Studesville, then a Chicago Bears assistant, when his mother died of cancer in 1998 meant a lot.

"I can see him being that players' coach people are looking for sometimes when there's a transition or something rocky has happened," Leipold said. "He's the kind of guy who can calm the waters and get along with all people."

A turning point

After following the pre-med path for the outset of his stay at Whitewater, Eric reassessed.

"I took the five-credit courses in biology and chemistry, but it came to the point in time where, not that I couldn't do it, but I decided that really wasn't for me," he said.

He started moving toward a career as an exercise physiologist, and majored in exercise science. His transcript was such, though, that he might be able to return to school to get back on the medical-school track, and his father held out hope that it might happen.

After graduating with honors from Whitewater in the spring of 1989, he worked for a year as a personal trainer in Madison with the UW Hospital's Sports Medicine Center.

"I didn't like working," Studesville said, "and I decided to go to graduate school."

He was admitted to the University of Arizona's exercise physiology program and went to Tucson in 1990. He found himself missing football and began checking out the Wildcats' practices. Dick Tomey was Arizona's coach.

"I pestered Coach Tomey for about a semester," Studesville said. "About every two weeks, I'd go over to the football offices and leave him a message saying who I was and that I'd like to talk to him about anything I could help him with, anything to be around football. Finally, after the Christmas break, I was able to sit down and talk with him — for a few moments."

Studesville laughed and added: "This week, I talked with Coach Tomey and reminded him of the fact that, at that moment, when he said, 'OK, you can be around,' that opened the door for me to be exposed to this business. I'm always going to be indebted to him."

Tomey, 72, retired from coaching last year after a five-season run as San Jose State's head coach.

"He was obviously very persistent," Tomey said from his home in Hawaii. "He also was terrific, right from the start. We were really, really glad we brought him on. He was assertive and he was confident, and you could tell he knew what he wanted, but he could make that known while being kind and articulate in stating his case well. We were just putting together our program at Arizona, and he worked with a tremendous group of people."

Tomey's staff included eventually- prominent coaches, such as Rich Ellerson, now the head coach at Army; Ron McBride, later the head coach at Utah; Duane Akina, currently the assistant head coach at Texas; and Gerald Carr, now the assistant head coach at Baylor. When Carr moved to North Carolina the next season to coach the quarterbacks, he successfully lobbied UNC coach Mack Brown into hiring Studesville — who had just received his master's degree — as the program's video assistant.

Studesville had to break the news to his dad, who still dreamed of his son going from graduate school to medical school. Eric told his father he would give coaching a try for five years and see where it led him.

"I was not happy," said Al, now a career counselor at Madison Technical College. "Typically, when I'm not happy, before I say or do anything stupid, I get in the car and go for a drive, or go for a little walk. This time, I went for a walk around the block."

He came around.

"I told him, 'I don't know a thing about what you're doing, or how it's going to work, but if that's what you want, you have my absolute support,' Al said.

Eric got invaluable experience for two years at North Carolina.

"What a fantastic person Mack Brown is," Studesville said. "I think the world of Coach Brown."

In 1994, he became the secondary coach at Wingate (N.C.) University.

"Once you set your feet in this profession, and you say this is it," he said, "the nomad life begins. But I've been so fortunate in this journey with the opportunities that have come, with the people I've worked with, with the learning experiences I've had."

He coached the defensive backs at Kent State in 1995-96, then joined the Chicago Bears as an offensive quality- control coach in 1997, where he worked under Dave Wannstedt and Dick Jauron. He was running backs coach for the New York Giants

from 2001-03, the Buffalo Bills from 2004-09 and joined the Broncos this season. Both Eric and his father make a point of saying how grateful they are to the various coaches who gave him chances, and it's at the heart of why he was fielding so many calls and messages of support last week.

"I watched that news conference, and I was smiling from ear to ear," Tomey said.

"I'm so proud of him," Berezowitz said. "No matter what he was going to go into, he was going to be good at it."

But this interim role comes with an underlying reality: If Studesville doesn't pull off the unlikely and become the head coach for next season, he might be looking for work again. He has been through that before, both at Chicago and Buffalo, when the head coach was fired. And he and his wife, Staci, and daughter Sydni, 5, could be on the road again.

"Our existence as coaches is always finite," Studesville said. "There's no guarantee of anything at the end of any year."

"I'm grasping this opportunity. I'm enjoying every day. I'm trying to do the best I can every day. If it's going to end, it's going to end, but it isn't going to be because I didn't try and I didn't give every part of who I am in my effort. As long as I walk away knowing that, I'm good with whatever happens."

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### About Eric Studesville

"You know when you talk to someone, you can just kind of tell they have those intangibles. They showed in Eric and they came out in Eric, the longer he was here. Everybody respected him."

— Bob Berezowitz, former Wis.-Whitewater coach

"No matter what comes out of this situation, I believe he'll be a coordinator and a head coach in the NFL in a very short period of time. Here's a guy who played defensive back and moved over to the offense, which shows he's a big picture guy. He's paid his dues to climb up the ladder, from video guy to quality control to on-field assistant. It's great to see that happen."

— Lance Leipold, Wis.-Whitewater teammate, now the Warhawks' head coach

"He's got an elaborate, elaborate, organized plan he's been putting together for several years in case he ever got the call or the opportunity. It's huge. It's a lot of things he's learned from the different people he's had the privilege of working with."

— Al Studesville, Eric's father

"I'm a teacher, and I teach the game of football. What my parents instilled in me are the same things important to me today. Those are the qualities I try to push now, and what I'm trying to express to the players. I just want your best. Let's go out and play as hard as we can for as long as we can, and see what happens."  
— Eric Stutesville

## Coach picks put Colo. on map

Studesville is the 8th African-American NFL coach and Embree the 15th at a major college.

By Lindsay H. Jones  
The Denver Post  
December 12, 2010

When Eric Studesville was named the Broncos' interim head coach on Monday, he viewed the promotion as a can't-miss career opportunity. His rise from running backs coach to head coach helped make NFL history. Less than eight years after the NFL instituted the Rooney Rule requiring teams to interview minority head coaching candidates, Studesville joins seven other black head coaches who are in charge of NFL teams, a record number for minority coaches.

The fraternity started at six at the beginning of 2010 — the same number as last season — and grew to eight with the additions of Minnesota interim head coach Leslie Frazier and Studesville, and now accounts for 25 percent of the league's head coaches.

"It's certainly something to be proud of," Studesville said. "I have so many other things going on right now with this football team that I haven't even gotten to that part of it."

In a span of little more than six hours on Monday, Colorado became home to two black head football coaches, this after never previously having any in charge of the Broncos or at any of the Division I universities.

The University of Colorado introduced Jon Embree, along with offensive coordinator Eric Bieniemy, at a news conference Monday morning. Studesville's promotion came later that afternoon, after Broncos owner Pat Bowlen fired Josh McDaniels.

"It's an honor, and it's humbling," Embree said Friday afternoon. "I understand what it means in the big picture, I really do. I don't want to shy away from it and pretend it doesn't exist. I'm embracing it and I want to try to help. It is unique, with the major pro franchise and the major university having African-American head coaches. Hopefully, one day it won't be something that jumps out like that."

Studesville becomes the 16th black head coach in the modern era of pro football. Ten, including Studesville, got that first head coaching job since the Rooney Rule was introduced in 2003, proof enough to Floyd Keith, the executive director of the Black Coaches Association, that the intention of the rule is working.

The NFL received an "A" grade for racial hiring practices in the 2010 annual Racial and Gender Report from the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida.

"It is obvious there are a lot of coaches capable of doing this job. It has been shown that coaches of color are capable of handling that," Keith said.

Still, the Rooney Rule isn't without its issues. Frazier interviewed seven times for head coaching jobs, including in Denver in 2009, and was not hired, prompting criticism of teams granting token interviews to circumvent the rules.

Should the Broncos choose to interview Stutesville in the search to find McDaniels' full-time replacement, they would fulfill their Rooney Rule requirements. The Broncos interviewed three minority candidates in their search in 2009 — Frazier, Raheem Morris (now the head coach in Tampa Bay), and Todd Bowles, assistant head coach with the Miami Dolphins.

"I'm going to be the best football coach I can be, and if someone is interested in talking to me about a position, I hope they want to talk to me because I'm a quality football coach, a quality person and they want me to be a part of their organization for those reasons, more so than anything else," Stutesville said.

Embree's hiring — especially paired with the hiring of Bieniemy as offensive coordinator — could be seen as an even bigger step. The NCAA has no formal rules in place requiring schools to conduct inclusive, diverse searches, though Keith said the Black Coaches Association has a five-step process it hopes schools adhere to in their searches.

Keith said Embree is now the 15th black head coach in major college football, out of 119 positions. Keith said he has not spoken to Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn, but said CU should be commended for the way it conducted its search to replace Dan Hawkins.

"Colleges have some catching up to do with the NFL, and you would think it would be flipped," Keith said.

Stutesville and Embree are both alumni of the NFL's Bill Walsh Minority Coaching Fellowship, a program that allows aspiring coaches to work at NFL training camps.

For Stutesville, his internship came with the Chicago Bears in 1996, when he was a college assistant coach at Kent State. Stutesville was hired by the Bears as a quality-control coach the next year and has been in the NFL ever since.

"You get to be in camp, be around the players, in the meetings and learn. It was a tremendous learning experience," Stutesville said. "For some guys, it's maybe, 'You know what? I don't want to do this. This is not an easy thing to do.'"

"For me, it was just the opposite."