

By EARL WATT

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The last time Cliff Abbott called a coin flip, it was to break a tie for a seat on the USD No. 480 School Board.

He lost that toss to Nick Hatcher. Beginning on Friday nights this fall, Abbott will get to call a lot of coin flips after accepting the position as the new head coach of the Liberal Redskins. Abbott will replace Wade Standley who coached the Redskins two seasons and had a 6-13 record. Liberal has not won a playoff game since 2005 when Steve Warner was the head football coach. Abbott has been a part of the Redskin program as a former player and recently as an assistant. He played for the Tulsa Golden Hurricane and was drafted by the New York Giants. Abbott will be very familiar with the upcoming athletes. He was a coach for West Middle school in 2008 and 2009 and an assistant with the Redskins last year.

“When I was first approached on this opportunity, I was very humbled to be considered,” Abbott said. “For me, this type of job, with the tradition and magnitude and impact it can have on kids’ lives and the community, I was humbled to have the opportunity to be placed in charge. On the other hand, it is almost like game day. I am so excited to put a positive thumbprint on the history of the Redskins. It doesn’t come

lightly or without a lot of work and concentration and focus.”

The Redskins have struggled in recent years, and Abbott said a turnaround won’t occur because he is the head coach but because of the desire and passion of the players. “It won’t happen because of one guy,” he said. “But because of the program and support from administration and community and for the most part the focus and hunger from our students that want to be successful and want to leave their mark.”

Abbott is already working on filling his coaching staff.

“One of the focuses I want is for the staff to have a passion for kids, a passion for the game and a passion to put others first before their own needs,” he said. “We will work hard and expect a lot out of our staff and our kids. You want to surround yourself with good people. We are still contacting people who have ties with the program and who know the honor it is to be a part of this program and have a vision to go where we want to go