

Tim Skipper

Head Coach

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Biography

Tim Skipper was named the 19th head coach of the Cal Poly football program in December of 2025 and is in his first season at the helm.

Skipper arrives in San Luis Obispo with 25 years of collegiate coaching experience and a ton of positive momentum following the job he did this past season at UCLA. He began the 2025 season at UCLA as special assistant to the head coach before being elevated to interim head coach following the Bruins' 0-3 start. Under his direction, the Bruins went 3-6 the rest of the way with victories over Penn State, Michigan State and Maryland.

"Tim's experience and accomplishments in college football speak for themselves, and I am thrilled to welcome him as our new head football coach," said Henderson. "I believe deeply that our student-athletes will benefit greatly from the culture he develops, his deep football knowledge and his infectious enthusiasm, and I look forward to partnering with him."

"I am extremely excited to become the next head football coach at Cal Poly and want to thank Carter Henderson and President Armstrong for entrusting me with this opportunity," Skipper said. "The 'Learn by Doing' approach and the academic excellence that has been achieved at Cal Poly have been inspiring to me for many years, and I look forward to pursuing the same type of excellence on the football field. It will take the full support of our community coming together to win championships, and I can't wait to engage with the Mustang family to chase our fullest potential together."

In 2024, Skipper served as interim head coach at Fresno State, leading the Bulldogs to a 6-7 record and a bowl appearance. He had previously served as acting head coach for Fresno State's 2023 bowl game, a 37-10 victory. The Bulldogs produced 11 All-Mountain West selections in 2024, their most in a season since 2022. Skipper was named Mountain West "Head Coach of the Week" three times by 247Sports, the most of any coach in the conference.

Skipper rejoined Fresno State in 2022 as linebackers coach and assistant head coach. That season, the Bulldogs became the first program in FBS history to start 1-4 and finish with 10 wins, ending the year on a nine-game winning streak that included the Mountain West Championship and a victory in the Jimmy Kimmel LA Bowl. The Fresno State defense ranked No. 2 in the Mountain West in scoring defense (19.4 points per game) and No. 4 in total defense (338.9 yards per game), with the linebackers' unit playing a central role.

Before his return to Fresno State, Skipper spent the 2020-21 seasons at Central Michigan, coaching linebackers and serving as assistant head coach in 2021. Between 2012-19, he held coaching positions at Colorado State, Florida and UNLV before moving to Central Michigan.

Skipper previously coached at Fresno State from 2006-11, working with running backs and linebackers and serving as defensive run coordinator. During that span, the Bulldogs advanced to four bowl games, supported by his development of multiple all-conference linebackers and running backs. In 2007, Fresno State averaged 204.7 rushing yards per game—ranking 16th nationally—and earned a berth in the Humanitarian Bowl.

Skipper is also familiar with the Big Sky Conference, having served as Sacramento State's defensive coordinator and defensive backs coach from 2003-05.

A four-year starting middle linebacker at Fresno State from 1997–2000, Skipper appeared on the 1999 and 2000 Butkus Award watch lists and finished his career with 418 tackles, the second-highest total in program history. A two-year team captain and three-time All-WAC selection, he recorded 117 tackles as a freshman and earned Freshman All-America honors.

Skipper comes from a family of coaches. His father, Jim, coached for four decades before retiring in 2019. His brother, Kelly, has coached since 1989 and currently serves as the running backs coach for the Buffalo Bills.

A New Orleans native, Skipper earned his bachelor's degree in communications from Fresno State in 2001.

SKIPPER'S COACHING EXPERIENCE

2001 – Defensive Backs, Western New Mexico

2002 – Defensive Coordinator/Defensive Backs, Western New Mexico

2003 – Defensive Backs, Sacramento State

2004, 2005 – Defensive Coordinator/Defensive Backs, Sacramento State

2006-08 – Running Backs, Fresno State

2009-11 – Linebackers/Defensive Run Game Coordinator, Fresno State

2012, 2013 – Linebackers, Colorado State

2013, 2014 – Linebackers/Assistant Head Coach, Colorado State

2015, 2016 – Running Backs, Florida

2017, 2018 – Linebackers, Florida

2018, 2019 – Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers, UNLV

2020 – Linebackers, Central Michigan

2021 – Linebackers/Assistant Head Coach, Central Michigan

2022, 2023 – Linebackers/Assistant Head Coach, Fresno State

2024 – Interim Head Coach, Fresno State

August 2025-September 2025 – Special Assistant to the Head Coach, UCLA

September 2025-November 2025 – Interim Head Coach, UCLA
