

Alfred University tabs Williams assistant as new men's basketball head coach

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ALFRED, NY Alfred University announces the appointment of Dale Wellman to the position of head men's basketball coach. Wellman succeeds Jay Murphy, who resigned his post earlier this year to become head coach for the AU women's team. Wellman had served the last two seasons as an assistant coach of the Williams (MA) College men's basketball team. His appointment to AU becomes effective Aug. 1. "I'm very excited to be at Alfred. This is a great opportunity," said Wellman, who is confident in his ability lead the Saxons. "I want to bring a winning mentality to the program. This has been a winning program before and there's no reason it can't be again." Wellman is a 1999 graduate of The University of the South in Sewanee, TN, where he earned a bachelor's degree in history. He played four seasons for the Tigers, participating twice in the NCAA Division III national championship tournament (1997 and 1998) and earning Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference academic honors in 1998. His collegiate coaching career began in 2002, when he was appointed assistant at Kenyon (OH) College. A year later, he was appointed assistant coach and assistant facility supervisor at Union College in Schenectady, NY. After a year at Union, Wellman accepted a graduate assistant coaching position at Division I Eastern Kentucky University. Following the 2004-05 season, he was appointed administrative assistant coach at Eastern Kentucky, from which he earned a master's degree in physical education (sports administration) in 2006. After earning his master's degree, Wellman left Eastern Kentucky to accept the assistant coaching position at Williams, under head coach Dave Paulson, who is now the head coach at Division I Bucknell University. During his two seasons at Williams, Wellman coordinated the Ephs' national recruiting programs; scouted opponents; organized the College's basketball camps; and assisted in scheduling opponents. In his first season at Williams, the Ephs went 16-12, won the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) title, and participated in the NCAA championships. Last season, Williams was ranked as high as fourth in the nation and finished the year 17-8. Jim Moretti, AU athletic director, is optimistic Wellman's success at Williams, one of the best Division III programs in the country, will translate into success at Alfred. "I'm confident his background, particularly his Williams College experience, will serve him well here," Moretti said. "He's coming from one of the top programs in the nation. He impressed the (selection) committee right away with his enthusiasm and energy, and his willingness to go the extra mile to bring in quality recruits." Wellman succeeds Murphy, who left the Saxons' bench after 13 seasons to take over the AU women's program. He inherits a roster that includes seven letterwinners (three starters) from last year's squad. In addition, sophomore forward Pat Smithgall (Perry, NY/Perry) is set to return to the team after missing last season with a knee injury. Smithgall was one of the top rebounders in all of Division III as a freshman in 2006-07 and would have been one of the top returning scorers last year. Wellman looks forward to meeting the Saxons' returning players and working with them this fall in preparation for the 2008-09 season. He will stress teamwork and team chemistry as he implements his offensive and defensive systems. "The one constant of the programs I've coached at has been that the team always comes first. The players have to know and understand their roles. The more they understand that, the better off the team will be," he said. "Team chemistry, to me, is the number one factor in creating a winning program."