

Grambling Dismisses Two Head Basketball Coaches

Contributed by Alex Knight-Black College Wire
Thursday, 10 April 2008

Wright, Ponton are on their way out

After an abysmal basketball season for the men and women, the Grambling State University Department of Athletics announced recently that head coaches Larry Wright (men's team) and David "Rusty" Ponton (women's team) will not return after this season.

This decision came after both head coaches managed to win a mere nine games combined this season.

Coach Ponton exits Grambling after 11 years at the helm of the women's basketball program. During his tenure at GSU, he went an impressive 181-139.

Ponton was promoted to head coach in 1997, after then coach Pat Bibbs took the head-coaching job at Hampton University. In Ponton's first three years at head coach, he was an astonishing 73-17 and won two SWAC championships. He also won four straight SWAC Coach of the Year awards. But in Ponton's last five seasons he was a combined 52-90.

After losing four starters from last year's team, Ponton's team this season struggled tremendously, going a miserable 2-26. (Eighteen of the 26 losses were by double digits.)

Grambling State alumnus Larry Wright ends his nine-year tenure at Grambling with a combined record of 88-161. Unlike Ponton, Wright managed no success in his tenure at Grambling. He failed to meet the standards as a coach that he met as a player in college and in the NBA.

In his nine years at the helm of the men's program, he manufactured only two winning seasons, and the highest number of games he won in a season was 14.

The men struggled this season, losing their first 11 games before getting into the win column. In their next seven games, they were 6-1, but they reverted to their old form, going 1-7 in their last eight games.

The Monroe native has been inducted into the SWAC and Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame; also he is the only first round NBA selection from GSU.

Senior women's administrator Sharon Perkins and assistant head coach Kenny Sykes will serve as the interim head coaches of the women's and men's teams, respectively.

{moshaloscan}

Alex Knight writes for The Gramblinite, the Grambling State University student newspaper, which originally published this article.