

Florida A&M Gives Basketball Coach the Pink Slip

Contributed by Royal Shepherd -- Black College Wire
Monday, 28 March 2011

Head basketball coach Eugene Harris fired after losing seasons

After four seasons of "underachieving," Florida A&M University has parted ways with former head basketball coach Eugene Harris.

Harris was notified of his termination in a four-paragraph letter he received in an afternoon meeting with Athletic Director Derek Horne.

During his tenure as head coach, Harris amassed a record of 46-80. Over the course of the past two seasons, the losses are double the total of the wins at 21-42. This season completed his third consecutive of 20-plus losses. Harris was in the fourth year of a 5-year contract at an annual rate of \$150,000 per year. He will remain on administrative leave with pay until June 10, according to the FAMU press release.

Harris replaced former head coach Mike Gillespie in 2007. Gillespie coached the Rattlers for six seasons, earning two NCAA postseason appearances.

Amin Stevens, the team's leading scorer and rebounder, still sees the team getting better despite the loss of his only collegiate coach.

"Administration made the move that they felt was in the best interest of the team," Stevens said. "No matter who coaches this team, we are going to keep working hard and get better as a unit."

Assistant Coach Maurice Sheals will take over the day-to-day operations of the team.

Stevens said that the growth of this team is not subjective to who the coach may be.

"I work my butt off to make myself better," Stevens said. "Coaches can teach you a lot, but you have to have the desire to get better. This team has that desire."

Coach Harris was a three-year starter and co-captain of the 1978 Florida State team that won the Metro Conference title.

A search committee is being formed immediately to find Harris' replacement.

Royal Shepherd writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.{moshaloscan}