



Wednesday, November 6, 2002

New women's basketball coach named

Oakland University has named Eileen Shea-Hilliard, assistant women's basketball coach at the University of Michigan, as its new head women's basketball coach. She replaces Beckie Francis, who stepped down from the position last week due to health concerns. Shea-Hilliard becomes the eighth head coach in the history of the women's program at Oakland.

"Our top priority over the last few days has been to ensure that Beckie Francis was in a position where she could get healthy," said Director of Athletics Jack Mehl. "We then turned our attention to finding a qualified replacement. In Eileen, we have found someone that has many of the same fine qualities as Beckie. I am sad that I am losing a good coach, but I am thrilled that the program is going to be in such capable hands. Eileen certainly has the capability of expanding on the foundation that Beckie has established. I am really excited about this hire, she comes to us highly recommended by both Michigan and Michigan State".

A native of Los Altos Hills, Calif., Shea-Hilliard comes to OU after a six-year stint as an assistant with the women's program at U of M, where she helped guide the team to three appearances in the NCAA Tournament and two in the WNIT, with the squad posting an overall record of 110-66. While in Ann Arbor, she assisted with all aspects of daily practice, individual workouts and game-day coaching, working primarily with Michigan's perimeter players. She worked with recruiting and scouting efforts and served as the summer camp director for the program. For the past year and a half, she was the team's recruiting coordinator.

"I am excited to be here at Oakland," Shea-Hilliard said. "I think it is a great opportunity to continue an already established program. They have come a long way in their four years in Division I, and I hope to take them even farther. Oakland offers the type of environment and recruits the type of student-athlete that I feel comfortable coaching."

Shea-Hilliard has a master's degree in kinesiology from U of M and has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Michigan State University.

A 1991 graduate of MSU, Shea-Hilliard was a three-time All-Big Ten performer for the Spartans and was named MSU's Athlete of the Decade for women's basketball. She twice was named the team's MVP and led the Spartans three times in scoring. She also excelled in the classroom where she was a three-time Academic All-American as well as a three-time Academic All-Big Ten selection. She also was awarded the Big Ten Medal of Honor and won a gold medal at the U.S. Olympic Festival.

Shea-Hilliard played professionally in Europe after her career at Michigan State, playing four years in Horsholm, Denmark, and one in Jonkoping, Sweden. She led her league in scoring in three of her five seasons and was named the Player of the Year in Denmark once and was chosen as Sweden's MVP her one season there.

Shea-Hilliard served as a head coach for both a girls and boys team in Denmark. Her girls team won three national championships and produced four Division I collegiate players, producing a record of 131-3 over four years. Her boys squad had a top finish of second in Denmark and went 37-8 over two seasons. She also spent one season as an assistant coach with the Danish national women's team.

SUMMARY

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