

Marshall selects Matt Daniel as head women's basketball coach

Written by Yolande Y. Lezine, Sports Editor
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Matt Daniel, who quickly built a successful NCAA Division I women's basketball program at Central Arkansas, was named as the new head women's basketball coach at Marshall University.

Daniel, 35, replaces Royce Chadwick, who resigned last month after 11 seasons at Marshall. At UCA, Daniel earned a reputation as a spirited and tireless young coach who displayed an ability to turn around a program. He is 72-50 for his career as a head coach and finished his last three seasons at UCA with a 66-26 record.

During his four years with the Sugar Bears, Daniel took UCA from Division II to the Division I level and guided a program that had two consecutive 20-loss seasons to its first Division I conference championship (Southland Conference), two postseason tournaments (WNIT in 2012, WBI in 2011), and three straight 21-win seasons. His teams had the best overall and conference records in the Southland Conference over the last three seasons. Daniel's recruiting ability has led to many of Central Arkansas recent successes. During the four years at UCA, he produced two Southland Players of the Year, a Southland Defensive Player of the Year and a Southland Freshman of the Year. Daniel also coached eight All-Conference selections, along with three first-team selections and three All-Academic honorees. He was the 2010 and 2012 Southland Coach of the Year.

"My wife and I are ecstatic to be back in Huntington," Daniel said. "I was recruited here as a player by coach Billy Donovan and I think that his style of play fits my style of play. We will play a style of basketball that is entertaining and fast paced. I think its more fun to coach, officiate, watch, and play against. We flipped the program at Central Arkansas into a championship program and a prominent program nationally. We will come and try to do the same at Marshall."

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Under Daniel's direction, women's basketball attendances increased significantly at UCA. Eight of the top 10 crowds in UCA history came in the last five years. UCA led the Southland in attendance, while developing an intimidating home-court advantage that included a 21-3 home conference record in the last three years.

"I am tremendously excited to have Matt Daniel join the Marshall Athletics family," Athletic Director Mike Hamrick said. "He brings not only experience as a Division I head coach, but also a proven track record of success, as his Central Arkansas squads have averaged 22 wins over the last three seasons. His reputation as a top recruiter and coach is well known in college basketball circles."

The Jonesboro, Arkansas native has other coaching experience at the University of Missouri, the University of Colorado, and Texas-Arlington, where he was an assistant coach at each institution.

Daniel started coaching as a graduate assistant for men's basketball at Arizona State and played collegiate basketball at Colorado and Harding University. He is a 1998 graduate of Harding University and was Mr. Basketball in Arkansas in 1994. He was named MVP of the state tournament after taking Jonesboro High School to a state title in Arkansas highest classification.

Daniel comes from a coaching family. His father, David is a highly respected figure in Arkansas after having spent more than 30 years coaching both in the high school ranks and at Arkansas State University.

Daniel will inherit a Marshall team that recorded its best overall record since 2008 this past season. The program returns a lot of experience as it brings back six of its top nine scorers and only loses three seniors to graduation. Ten of the 12 returners averaged seven minutes or more on the court each game. After having the best start to a season since 1986-87, the Herd, ended the season with a 16-14 record.