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SOUTHERN STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PRESS RELEASE
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CUTLINE: Matt Wells stands in front of Southern State Community College's Patriot Center where he will take on his new role as athletic director.

Matt Wells takes helm of SSCC athletics

Matt Wells, head coach of the Southern State Community College's women's basketball team, has been selected to serve as the college's athletic director.

"We are proud to welcome Matt in his new role for Southern State athletics," said James Bland, SSCC Vice President of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management. "Matt's background and accomplishments in coaching demonstrate his strong leadership abilities and his commitment to helping student-athletes find success in and out of the classroom."

A graduate of Western Brown High School, Wells is a veteran on field, court, and diamond. Throughout his high school and college tenure, he played football, basketball, baseball, and tennis. He has 18 years' experience coaching football, basketball and track for several local high schools, including Western Brown, Williamsburg, Amelia, and East Clinton. In 2012, he joined the coaching staff at Southern State.

"Getting the opportunity to be the athletic director at Southern State is a tremendous honor," Wells said. "Southern State has a rich tradition in athletics, plus it is a wonderful chance for young men and women to get a great education at a low tuition and also a chance to play college sports."

Wells is taking on a dual role, serving as both head coach and athletic director. He credits his background in a variety of sports with helping him oversee the department.

“I’ve been around athletics non-stop,” he said. “Many of the athletic directors I worked with were coaches too, so being able to witness how they handled both positions will benefit me as I take on my new role.”

Wells said that students who choose to participate in sports at Southern State are well supported in both athletics and academics.

“Our student-athletes have the opportunity to receive scholarships for participation in individual sports,” he said. “We also have a great academic advisor, Heather Miller, who is specifically assigned to our student-athletes. Furthermore, the support across administration has been outstanding. Everyone is committed to giving our student-athletes, and all of our students, a strong foundation.”

While the athletic facilities at Southern State primarily are used for college events, Wells said he is inviting the community to utilize the space. The floor of the Patriot Center is marked to accommodate a volleyball court, two full-length basketball courts which run east to west, as well the main basketball court which runs north to south. For both sports, the markings follow both high school and collegiate guidelines.

“We’ve gotten a commitment from Fairfield High School to hold one men’s and one women’s basketball game here, and we’re looking to bring even more high school games to campus,” said Wells. “We also are hoping that during the summer months, we can bring in AAU teams and tournaments, summer camps, and coaches’ clinics.”

The athletics department at Southern State currently includes softball and basketball for women, and soccer and basketball for men, though Wells looks to expand the opportunities.

“I’d like to see Southern State branch out and give our students more options as student-athletes,” he said. “To start, we will be adding women’s soccer for the 2015-16 academic year. We are currently recruiting for a head coach and looking to add prospective players.”

Wells provided updates on the upcoming season for the SSCC Patriots:

SOCCER – Josh Thoroman is beginning his 13th year as the head coach for men’s soccer; he is joined by assistant coach Sean Sweeney. Thoroman took the Patriots to the National Championships in 2009 and is 10 victories away from his 300th career win for Southern State. He has nearly 30 student-athletes trying out for 22 team positions. The first home game will be held Sept. 16.

BASKETBALL – Blake Kibler has been named as the new head coach for men’s basketball; his assistant is Jeremy Hatfield. Eight local athletes have signed letters of intent to play for the SSCC Patriots. Matt Wells is beginning his third year as head coach for women’s basketball; he is joined by assistant coach Andrea Gifford. Currently, 10 local athletes have signed letters of intent. The basketball teams will begin practicing Oct. 1, and the game schedule is still being arranged. Men’s and women’s games are generally scheduled on the same days; typically at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on weekdays, and 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on weekends.

SOFTBALL – Daniel Ward has been named as the new head coach for women’s softball. Though the season will not begin until Feb. 1, four students have announced their intention to play for the SSCC Patriots.

“The coaches and I will work together to provide our student-athletes an opportunity to grow as students and athletes,” said Wells. “We are looking for student-athletes from our five

service counties—Adams, Brown, Clinton, Highland and Fayette—which have some of the finest players. Southern State wants to become their home for an education and continuing their playing careers.”

All SSCC Patriots’ home games are played in the Patriot Center or on the front field at the college’s Central Campus, 100 Hobart Drive in Hillsboro, and admission is free.

“I do have to thank the administration of Southern State for giving me this opportunity, especially President Kevin Boys, James Bland and Dr. J.R. Roush,” said Wells. “It is a good time to be a Patriot!”

For more information about becoming a student-athlete at Southern State Community College, contact Wells at 1-800-0628-7722, ext. 2697 or visit www.sccc.edu/athletics/prospective-student-athlete.shtml to complete a Prospective Student Athlete Form. To view schedules, please visit www.sccc.edu/athletics/index.shtml.

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