

Jeff Hironaka Promoted To Men's Basketball Head Coach

SEATTLE (Apr. 30, 2002) – Jeff Hironaka, the top assistant for each of the last 11 seasons, has been promoted to head coach of men's basketball at Seattle Pacific University. Hironaka, 45, replaces Ken Bone, who resigned after 12 years Apr. 16 to accept a position at the University of Washington.

During his tenure at Seattle Pacific, Hironaka has proven vital in the Falcons' rise to national prominence. They have won 236 of 323 games, won five outright or shared conference championships and have earned NCAA Division II tournament berths eight of the last nine years. This past season SPU went 24-5, claimed a share of the Great Northwest Athletic Conference championship and advanced to the second round of the playoffs.

"In the past 10 days it became apparent that SPU could not find a more knowledgeable or dedicated person to take the reins of our program," said athletic director Tom Box, whose search started and finished with Hironaka. "Jeff is the type of person who gives everything he has to his work. For 11 years he's been loyal, tireless and intelligent in how he supported Coach Bone, the players and the men's basketball program. He's also a Christian coach who strives to present a positive role model to his athletes. That's important to SPU."

"When I first discussed the opportunity with him, I could see the fire in his eyes and it was obvious he felt ready. We all believe Jeff will light a fire in this program as it begins a new era."

"I'm excited but at the same time I know there's so much work to be done. So, it may be awhile before I actually have time to reflect and celebrate," said Hironaka. "This is my first choice of where I'd like to be head coach. I've invested a great deal of time and effort in helping to build this program and I'd like to continue the job and finish it by bringing home a national championship at some point in time."

"The last two weeks seemed like a month," he said of the interview and selection process. "After 22 years, 15 as a assistant, you're never sure when or if your time will come. I'd like to thank Ken for the opportunity to be his assistant and both President Eaton and Tom Box for giving me the chance to run the program. A lot of current and former SPU players and other members of the campus community have openly supported me, and I'm grateful for that."

Hironaka is believed to be only the second Japanese-American active head coach of a four-year program, joining Dave Yanai of Cal State L.A. Of the last seven head coaches hired by Seattle Pacific, six (including Hironaka) had previously served as assistants at the school. His 11-year run as Bone's chief aide was the longest of any assistant in program history.

Hironaka has over 20 years of bench experience and an extensive network of contacts in the college game. He has coordinated the team defensive strategies, along with the program's recruiting, travel and correspondence with opponents. Hironaka joined Bone's staff in 1991 and became the associate head coach in 1996.

Before coming to SPU, Hironaka had three years of experience at the Division I level. He served on the staff at Idaho State from 1987-90, and later was an assistant and assistant athletic director at The Master's College in Newhall, California. While at Idaho State he completed his master's in sports administration.

A native of Weiser, Idaho, Hironaka began his coaching career in earnest in the prep ranks, beginning at his old high school as coach of the junior varsity and varsity assistant in 1980. In 1986 he became head coach at Idaho's Ririe High School, and moved to Blackfoot High the following year.

Hironaka was also an accomplished player, lettering three seasons at Eastern Oregon, where he obtained his degree in secondary education in 1980. He was a member of the team's coaching staff in 1979-80. In high school, he was an all-Snake River Conference selection at guard at Weiser. He is single and resides in Seattle's Queen Anne neighborhood.



Jeff Hironaka

Seattle Pacific Coaching Records

<i>Years</i>	<i>Coach</i>	<i>Won</i>	<i>Lost</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
1943-45	Wesley Walls	22	9	.710
1945-47	Hugh Miner	2	15	.118
1947-52	Harold McNeese	43	71	.377
1952-57	Ken Foreman	50	72	.410
1957-74	Les Habegger	267	170	.611
1974-80	Keith Swagerty	87	75	.537
1980-84	Jim Poteet	64	48	.571
1984-90	Claude Terry	80	92	.465
1990-02	Ken Bone	253	97	.723
2002-	Jeff Hironaka			