

SPORTS



ON THE RISE — The status of Jacksonville University Coach Yolette McPhee-McCuin is on the rise, following another stellar season in the Sun Atlantic Conference.

McPhee-McCuin established as high market NCAA coach

Will she stay at Jacksonville University?

The defeat (68-58) at the hands of top rival Florida Gulf Coast on Sunday, for the Atlantic Sun Conference ASUN) title had to be deflating for Coach Yolette McPhee-McCuin and her Jacksonville University Dolphins.

The coach is a fighter, just like her dad, the indomitable Gladstone "Moon" McPhee. The conference title was the ticket into the prestigious National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1 Tournament. The loss had to hurt, but nevertheless a 24-8 season record, the third 20-win barrier she has attained, cemented her as the most prolific coach in the school's women's basketball program.

Known for being feisty and extroverted when in the coaching element, McPhee-McCuin nevertheless has a somber characteristic that enables her to define the best attributes of players, observe, measure and accept that which is not workable.

Those traits are necessary in a good coach, particularly in NCAA Division I territory.

I was able to get a good sense for just what Coach McPhee-McCuin is like, when recruiting and assessing players, several months ago during a return visit home in Freeport, Grand Bahama. I sat right next to her as she got a look at some young aspiring basketball ladies at the St. George's Gymnasium.

She noticed a slim 6-3 high school lass, with raw but quality talents. She was nifty with the ball, had a good general presence on the court and looked good to the Jacksonville coach.

Then came the clincher however.

"How old is she," the coach asked. When told the girl's age, it was clear that Coach McPhee-McCuin was disappointed.

"If she was younger, that girl would have been on the flight with me back to Jacksonville," said the coach.

It's that keen appraisal and understanding of the cut-off points that contributes towards McPhee-McCuin being one of



NATIONAL COACH — Yolette McPhee-McCuin has served as the National Coach of The Bahamas.

the high marketable coaches in the entire NCAA system, from Division I down the line.

No doubt, she has given JU Athletics an incredible bounce. She is in her fifth season and the

be able to keep the coach, who has two more years left on the current contract, is hot on the campus and general area according to newspaper reports.

What will she do?

pect of McPhee-McCuin. Her father, Coach Gladstone, had opportunities to carry his brilliant basketball mindset elsewhere. He, through the years became acquainted with some

He could have long been gone from The Bahamas.

Coach Moon though, opted to stay grounded in the environment he loves dearly. Even now, despite delighting in visiting his

within him to return home, back to his HOYTES (Helping Our Youth Through Education and Sports) Program.

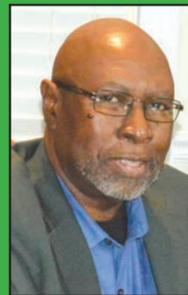
By all appearances, Coach McPhee-McCuin loves it in Jacksonville. If the powers that be at the university are able to sweeten the pot to a "sufficient" degree, the likelihood is that the young lady who was crafted for coaching by her father might be around for an extended period of time when the present contract runs out.

Whatever the case, she is one of the truly fantastic and fascinating daughters of the Bahamian soil, who is destined, I think, for much greater achievements. Go Yolette!

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SPORTS SCOPE

By Fred Sturup



Dolphins under her have become an ASUN power team. The topic as to whether Jacksonville will

There is a factor in favor of Jacksonville, though a slight one, because of the success as-

of the finest peers in collegiate basketball in the United States, Canada and the Latin Region.

coaching daughter in Jacksonville for weeks at a time during each year, the longing stays

(To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturup at sturup1504@gmail.com or on WhatsApp at 727-6363).