

SPORTS



MOVING TO MISS. – Coach Yolett McPhee-McCuin (right) with husband Kelly and daughters Yasmine (5) left, and Yuri (6 months).

'Coach Yo' moves on to Ole Miss, SEC OLE MISS WILL BE A HUGE CHALLENGE

It's obviously a bitter/sweet feeling.

It's official! Grand Bahama's Yolett McPhee-McCuin has outgrown Jacksonville University and her beloved Dolphins.

On Friday, with mother and father (Daisy and Coach Gladstone "Moon" McPhee); husband Kelly; daughters Yasmine and Yuri present at The Pavilion on the Ole Miss campus in Oxford, Mississippi, 'Coach Yo' will officially sign on to coach the University of Mississippi Women's Basketball Team.

She confirmed as much on Wednesday morning, when we talked via telephone. Parting is such sweet sorrow indeed.

"Jacksonville and the Dolphins will always be in my heart. I got my first shot at administration there and it has been incredible. The players have been fantastic and I would not be going to Ole

Miss without that process," said Coach Yo.

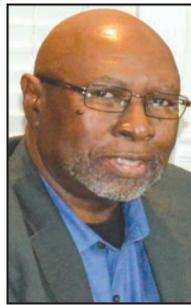
The step from the Atlantic Sun Conference (ASUN) to the most noted female entity in collegiate basketball, the South Eastern Conference (SEC) is a huge one and while transitioning will certainly be delightful, there is sorrow in knowing that she is leaving behind the sweetness of five highly successful seasons during which Coach McPhee-McCuin turned Jacksonville into an ASUN power.

She added three consecutive 20-win seasons to just two others Jacksonville had amassed previously in its entire history.

She gave the Dolphins a taste of competition in the Women's National Invitational Tournament (WNIT) and also the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Tournament. The NCAA berth came following the 2015-2016 season

SPORTS SCOPE

BY FRED STURRUP



and triumph in the ASUN title game.'

"Yes, I have accepted the head coaching position at Ole Miss. The SEC is the best conference in the country. The highest level of basketball is played there. The competition is phenomenal.

"I know that I have a lot of work to do, but that comes with the territory because I really want to make my mark in

coaching," said Coach Yo.

She will have to take her new group of players, the Ole Miss Rebels, up against perennial powerhouses of collegiate basketball, such as Mississippi State, South Carolina, Georgia, Missouri, LSU (Louisiana State University) and Alabama.

Coach Yo is inheriting a team that finished just 12-19 for the season and a horrific 1-15 in the

conference.

It will be an uphill struggle for sure. Coach Yo's background has prepared her for challenges, nevertheless. The many mornings getting up at 5 a.m. to go on the Basil Neymour Park's court on Coral Road with her mentor and dad, in Freeport, grounded her in discipline and work ethics.

As coaching is deep-rooted in her system, so is rising to the occasion. I feel strongly that she will make quite a positive difference. In this space a few weeks ago, the high market value Coach Yo had built up, was emphasized. I expressed the view also that Jacksonville would have to dig deep to keep her on staff. For several years, Old Dominion and other institutions have been taking appreciable looks at Coach McPhee-McCuin.

Obviously, the interest was

widespread.

According to a report announcing the McPhee-McCuin/Ole Miss new partnership, Athletic Director Ross Bjork said, "Throughout our search process it became clear to us that Coach McCuin is a star in the making and we better secure her leadership before another program does."

Coach Yo compiled a 94-63 record with Jacksonville and will follow Matt Insell at Ole Miss. Coach Insell and Ole Miss parted ways after the sub-.500 win-loss record of 70-87.

Now, it's up to Coach Yo to take the Ole Miss Rebels into an area of respectability.

Go Coach Yo!
Congratulations!

• To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturrup at sturrup1504@gmail.com

GB Coach airs frustration with CARIFTA Team coaches

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The 2018 FLOW CARIFTA Games are in the books, with a second place finish for Team Bahamas in the medal standings.

While Grand Bahama can boast six medalists – Latrell Taylor (U17 Boys' Triple Jump), Tyler Missick (U17 Boys' High Jump), Devine Parker (U20 Girls' 200 meters), Ebony Kelly (U20 Girls' 4x400m), D'Vontae Forbes (U17 Boys' 4x400m) and Terrance Jones (U17 Boys' 200m), there were some issues had, with the lack of use and handling of some of the selected Grand Bahamian athletes. Sixteen Grand Bahamian athletes were selected to the 80-member CARIFTA roster.

Local Grand Bahamian coach, Jason Larrimore caught up with this daily, while at the Thomas A. Robinson Stadium, at the conclusion of the CARIFTA Games, April 2. The night prior, April 1, the Under 20 Girls' 4x100m relay finals had been contested, to close out the evening session.

Larrimore's frustrations, firstly, began on arriving to New Providence on the Grand Bahama contingent arrived Saturday, March 24. Twelve-year old



MORE MUST BE DONE - Local Grand Bahamian coach Jason Larrimore, center, sits with Grand Bahama CARIFTA team members Ebony Kelly, far left, Destiny Huyler, first right, and Kennedy Culmer, far right during the team's trip to New Providence. Larrimore recently voiced his frustrations with the CARIFTA coaching staff and team management for their decisions during the 2018 FLOW CARIFTA Games.

Akaya Lightbourne was selected to the National Team, but was told she would not be allowed to stay at the team's hotel, The Melia.

"They (Team Management) greeted me at the hotel telling me my 12-year old, Akaya Lightbourne, can't stay at the hotel. So I asked them how? She is 12 years old, y'all paid for her to come here, she didn't pay her way here. So now you're going to tell me she has to find some place to stay!"

The matter was later rectified, when Bahamas Association of Athletics Association (BAAA) president, Rosamunde Carey was contacted and spoke with team manager Courtney Wallace.

Next, there were notable omissions of two female Grand Bahamian athletes that could have helped The Bahamas grab gold that evening, in Destiny Huyler and Kennedy Culmer, who Larrimore believed should have been utilized in place of third leg runner, Lakelle Kinteh and anchor leg runner Sasha Wells.

The team also featured Grand Bahamian native Devine Parker, on the second leg and Denisha Cartwright starting off the race. The team, eventually, won the silver medal finishing behind Jamaica.

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