

Savage Named Softball Coach

Written by Mike Flynn
Saturday, 12 July 2014 09:27

Janice Savage, a nine-year coaching veteran that has served as head coach at Delaware State University the past two seasons, was named the fourth head coach in Appalachian State University softball history

on Friday.

Savage was named the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Coach of the Year in 2014 after leading her team, whose starting lineup was comprised of seven sophomores and three freshmen, to the MEAC North Division title and a third-place finish at the conference tournament.

The Hornets finished 35-17 overall in 2014 with a 15-3 record in league play and led the MEAC in virtually every statistical category, including winning percentage (.673), batting average (.321), ERA (2.12) and fielding percentage (.957). DSU also ranked among the top 75 nationally in batting average (16th), ERA (25th), winning percentage (41st), double plays turned per game (47th), scoring (64th) and slugging percentage (75th).

Individually, she coached the MEAC's Rookie of the Year and four players that earned all-conference recognition, including three first-teamers.

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Off the field, her team put together a 3.54 cumulative GPA in the 2013 fall semester, which was the highest team GPA among Delaware State's 15 varsity programs, while 13 of her 15 student-athletes maintain a cumulative of 3.0 or higher. The program also heard a perfect NCAA Academic Progress Rate score of 1,000 for the year.

Serving as the interim head coach at DSU in 2013, she led the Hornets to a 22-35 overall record and a 12-6 mark in conference play, good for third place in the MEAC's North Division.

Prior to becoming a head coach, Savage spent seven as an assistant coach, including two stints at Delaware State (2006-08, 2011-12) and a year each at Bowling Green (2009) and North Florida (2010). She served as the pitching coach in her first term at Delaware State and at BGSU and UNF before assuming a more comprehensive role as the top assistant when she returned for her second stint at DSU.

As an assistant at Delaware State in 2008, she helped lead the Hornets to the MEAC championship and first-ever NCAA Tournament berth. In the opening round of the Austin Regional, DSU were five outs away from upsetting host Texas before dropping a heartbreaking 3-2 decision to the Longhorns.

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Savage also starred as a softball student-athlete at Delaware State, where she was a pitcher from 2004-05. Despite playing just the final two seasons of her collegiate career at DSU, she is the school's all-time leader in career strikeouts (323) and also owns program records for single-season (185) and single-game (17) strikeouts. She was a first-team all-MEAC and all-ECAC honoree, as well as a two-time National Fastpitch Coaches Association academic all-American and two-time MEAC Commissioner's Award winner.

She began her collegiate career at Appalachian State's longtime conference rival Georgia Southern, where she earned all-Southern Conference recognition.

Following the end of her collegiate career, Savage played one season professionally for Team Axia of the Italian Women's Professional Softball League, becoming the first female student-athlete from Delaware State to ever sign a professional sports contract.

She was inducted into the Delaware State Athletics Hall of Fame in 2012.

Savage earned two degrees from DSU, a bachelor's in sports management (2005) and a master's in sports administration (2009).

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She has two children, Jada and Colton.

“I first would like to thank Delaware State University for everything they have done for my family and myself,” Savage said. “I appreciate the opportunity they gave me and that allowed me to become a better coach and person. DSU has given me an amazing experience and I am and will forever be a Hornet.

“I am extremely excited about the opportunity to coach at Appalachian State University,” she continued. “The support I have received already from the staff and administration has made this an even more exciting time for me. I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to getting to Boone and start preparing for the Sun Belt Conference!”

JANICE SAVAGE AT A GLANCE:

Record as a Head Coach

Overall: 57-52 (two seasons)

Conference: 27-9

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Coaching Experience

2014: Delaware State (head coach)

2013: Delaware State (interim head coach)

2011-12: Delaware State (assistant coach)

2010: North Florida (assistant coach)

2009: Bowling Green (assistant coach)

2006-08: Delaware State (assistant coach)

Playing Experience

2005: Team Axia (Italian Women's Professional Softball League)

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2004-05: Delaware State

2002-03: Georgia Southern

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT JANICE SAVAGE:

“We’re excited to have Coach Savage join the Appalachian State family. She has had tremendous success as a coach and student-athlete at the Division I level and stresses achievement off the field as much as winning on it. I believe that she is the right choice to lead our program into the Sun Belt Conference and beyond.”

— **Appalachian State director of athletics Charlie Cobb**

“Appalachian is excited to have Coach Savage become our next head coach and lead us into the Sun Belt Conference. Her personality, energy level, enthusiasm, love for the game and teaching ability will do her well at App State. She is a fireball that loves winning, loves her players, works them hard and expects strong academic performances out of them. We can’t wait for her to get on campus and get started with our team!

— **Appalachian State senior woman administrator Debbie Richardson**

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“I am excited for the Mountaineers’ softball program as they start this next chapter with Coach Savage. She will definitely be a huge asset to both the softball and the athletic program. Coach Savage has a great ability to teach, coach and recruit quality student-athletes, who will represent Appalachian State well in the classroom, on the field and in the community.”

— St. Joseph’s University softball head coach Terri Adams

“Janice Savage is the right choice to take over the App State softball program. You could not have found a coach who will be more invested in her players academically and athletically. She will not only develop champions on the field but bring her insight and life experience to develop young women who are positive role models off the field. She has a vision for what a championship program should look like and she won’t stop working until she brings that success to App State.”

— Georgetown University softball head coach Pat Conlan

“Janice worked at a lot of my camps and clinics. She was a great player, which translates to her coaching. She really treats kids well — she treats them as a coach should and she makes sure they work hard. With that and her success on the field, I think she will be a great at Appalachian State.”

— Towson University softball head coach Lisa Costello

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“I’ve known Coach Savage since she was a pitcher in high school, recruited her and have kept track of her over the years. She is a tremendous young lady and a heck of a coach. She is family-oriented and I am happy to get her back in the south so we can see each other more often. She will do a really good job at Appalachian State.”

— **Winthrop University softball head coach Mark Cooke**