

Ohio State Hires Jamall Walker As Assistant Coach



Ohio State head coach Jake Diebler continued to fill out his coaching staff on Wednesday, hiring Grand Canyon's Jamall Walker as an assistant coach. Walker, 46, brings 24 years of collegiate coaching experience to Columbus, including eight seasons coaching in the Big Ten.

"I could not be more happy to welcome Jamall and his family to the Ohio State basketball family," Diebler said in a statement. "Jamall's recruiting success, his experience in the Big Ten as well as working with a coach like Bryce Drew were all really important intangibles that I was looking for when filling out a staff. He's got a great defensive mind and a tremendous ability to connect with players. He's going to be a great asset for our program."

Walker joins Ohio State's staff after spending the last four seasons as an assistant at Grand Canyon University under head coach Bryce Drew — who Diebler spent three seasons coaching under as an assistant coach at Vanderbilt from 2016-19. He is fresh off helping lead the Antelopes to a 30-win season and first NCAA Tournament win in program history this season, a 75-66 upset win over No. 5 seed St. Mary's on March 22. The Lopes compiled a 94-32 record and secured two additional NCAA Tournament berths in 2021 and 2023 while Walker was on staff.

Before Walker's time at Grand Canyon, he got a considerable taste of Big Ten basketball at Illinois, where he was an assistant for both John Groce and Brad Underwood from 2012-20. While the Illini compiled four 20+ win seasons and an NCAA Tournament berth in 2012-13 with Walker on staff, his most notable coaching performance may have occurred in 2017, where he led the program to the NIT quarterfinals as interim head coach following Groce's firing.

Walker also has experience coaching in the state of Ohio, spending two separate stints as an assistant at Ohio University from 2008-09 and then 2010-12. In between those positions was a stint as director of operations at Arizona under now-Xavier head coach Sean Miller.

A Wichita, Kansas, native, Walker was a four-year letterwinner at St. Louis from 1997-2000, helping lead the Billikens to an NCAA Tournament appearance in 1998 as the team's point guard. He recorded 350 career assists at St. Louis and graduated from the university with a degree in secondary education

in 2000.

Walker is the third hiring Diebler has made to his staff since he was named full-time head coach on March 17. He first hired former USC Upstate head coach and longtime Thad Matta assistant as an assistant coach on March 25, then grabbed Joel Justus from NC State following its Final Four run on April 8 to serve as his associate head coach.