

Gerry Matthews Retiring Basketball Coach after 30 Years, 603 Wins

Scott Bittner to Become Interim Head Coach for 2016-17 Season

For Immediate Release; photos on [Flickr](#)

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Galloway, N.J. . After 603 wins in 30 seasons at Stockton University, [Gerry Matthews](#), the winningest men's basketball coach in New Jersey history, is calling it a career and retiring as the Stockton head coach. [Scott Bittner](#) will be elevated to interim head coach for the 2016-17 season after 10 years on the staff during which he has served as assistant coach and associate head coach.

In addition to being the consummate basketball coach, Coach Matthews has been an unwavering friend and mentor of every single student-athlete with whom he has come in contact during his career. Simply stated, there has never been a better coach in any sport in our history, and Gerry has set the standard when it comes to commitment and loyalty to his student-athletes. He will be sorely missed, but never forgotten.

Matthews never had a losing season at the helm of the Osprey program, amassing a 603-243 record (.713 winning percentage). He is one of just 16 coaches in NCAA Division III history to reach the 600-win mark and he ranks in the top 20 all-time in Division III in winning percentage. Matthews led Stockton to 16 NCAA Tournament berths and a 25-17 record in NCAA Tournament play. His teams won at least one game in 12 of their 16 NCAA trips and advanced to the Final Four twice (1987, 2009).

Coach Matthews has led an incredible era not only for Stockton Athletics but the entire school. Lonnie Folks, director of Athletics.

Matthews, who arrived at Stockton in 1985,

Any decision; there is no pressure from anyone to do anything one way or another. I just
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[Among his many accomplishments](#), the longtime Stockton head coach notched 18 20-win seasons and won nine New Jersey Athletic Conference championships, capturing league titles in four different decades (1980s, 1990s, 2000s, 2010s). His teams played in the NJAC championship game 16 times in his 30 seasons and Matthews was voted NJAC Coach of the Year nine times by his peers.

Matthews became the winningest coach in New Jersey men's basketball history with a 78-58 triumph over Farmingdale State on Nov. 17, 2012 that gave him 515 wins, one more than longtime Princeton head coach Pete Carril.

Matthews hit the 600-win plateau with a 76-56 victory over Kean last season, on Feb. 13, 2016. His 603rd - and final win - came two weeks later as the Ospreys topped The College of New Jersey 60-53 to earn Matthews' ninth NJAC championship.

“His coaching style and success, which really extend beyond the court, explained Bittner, the incoming interim head coach who has spent a decade coaching with Matthews.

“His ability to connect with his players, and they leave a lasting impression on fellow coaches and colleagues campus-wide, according to Bittner.

“His ability to connect with his players and he does it better than anyone. That is the biggest lesson I learned from Coach Matthews. He treats his players off the court, and these relationships are what really set him apart as a father and a mentor.”

Matthews said that mentoring players is a large part of what you do.

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Former Stockton basketball player Armin Cane, of Pleasantville, who recently finished his four-year NCAA eligibility, said he was a fan of Coach Matthews.

“His service reaches far beyond athletics - Matthews is an ambassador for Stockton. His coaching style and success, which really extend beyond the court, explained Bittner, the incoming interim head coach who has spent a decade coaching with Matthews.

In addition to elevating his student-athletes, Matthews is an ambassador for Stockton.

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Over the past few years, and believes T's greatest contribution to the team has been his consistency.

He has held the seat for 30 years, and his decisions were always in the