http://www.gwinnettprepsports.com/sports/huff-comes-home-to-take-over-duluth-boys-basketball-program/article_19a4918c-2a63-5e31-880a-047cb0f6a5d2.html

Huff comes home to take over Duluth boys basketball program

By David Friedlander

david.friedlander@gwinnettdailypost.com   May 16, 2016

Cabral Huff

It has taken awhile, but Duluth High School has found a new coach to lead its boys basketball program, and it's someone who may be quite familiar to fans throughout Gwinnett County and all of metro Atlanta.

Cabral Huff was actually introduced to the Wildcat players a few weeks ago, though it wasn't until late last week that the 37-year-old Atlanta native arrived back in town after tying up some loose ends from his previous job as an assistant on the staff at Alcorn State University in Mississippi.

"I really wanted to get back to my home stand and city and get back to coaching young men at an age where it's make or break," Huff said. "Duluth offered that opportunity. Gwinnett County is tradition rich, and it's a chance to compete at the highest level. … I'm excited about that opportunity, and I'm really looking forward to it."

Huff has, indeed, returned to his home state of Georgia, where he made a name for himself at three previous head coaching stops, most notably at St. Francis High School in Alpharetta.

There, Huff amassed a 135-95 record in six seasons that featured back-to-back region championships in 2013 and 2014 and five state tournament appearances, including the 2014 Class A (Private) state title.

He also has coached several current big-name players at St. Francis, including current collegians like Malik Beasley (Florida State), Kaiser Gates (Xavier) and Josh Coleman (Coastal Carolina), and recent signees like Kobi Simmons (Arizona) and James Banks (Texas).

And he's looking forward to continuing that trend with the Wildcats.

"One of the things I really like is to develop players," Huff said. "This team was right on the verge of the (state) tournament (this past season), and we're going to strive to get back there with hard work and perseverance and growth of the kids at every level."

Huff inherits a Wildcats program that has produced its share of strong players over the past five seasons under Eddie Hood, who amassed a 72-50 record, including Duluth's first two state tournament appearances in 15 years, before leaving to take the athletic director job at Central Gwinnett.

And outgoing Duluth athletic director Chris Kirkpatrick is quite confident Huff will be able to keep up that recent winning tradition.

"He's got experience in college and high school and I think he definitely understands the landscape here in Gwinnett," Kirkpatrick said. "I think he is a person who will be able to take the program where Coach Hood left it and take it on to that next step. He's a guy who has a good rapport with kids and obviously has vast experiences."

THE HUFF FILE

Name: Cabral Huff

New position: Head boys basketball coach at Duluth

Former position: Assistant men's basketball coach at Alcorn State University

Age: 37

Career record: 135-95

Education: Graduated from Mays High School in 1996; graduated from Morehouse College in 2000; earned masters in coaching and athletic administration from Concordia University in 2013

Background: Played at Mays and two seasons at Morehouse as wing; high school head coaching experience came at Cedartown, Atlanta International and St. Francis in Alpharetta, leading the Knights to five state tournament appearances in six seasons, including the Class A (Private) state championship in 2014 and a state runner-up finish in 2013; was the Georgia Sports Writers Association's Class A Coach of the Year in 2014; spent the last two seasons as an assistant in the college ranks, first at Georgia Southern in 2014-15, helping guide the Eagles to a 22-9 record, and at Alcorn State this past season; also has experience coaching professionally in the WBA and the ABA.

Family: Single