



Donnie Jones
Head Coach
Men's Basketball
University of Central Florida

Donnie Jones, one of the nation's premier recruiters and a rising star in the coaching community, was selected as the head coach of the UCF men's basketball program on March 29, 2010. Jones took over the Knights after three seasons at Marshall, where he quickly turned around the Thundering Herd program.

Jones was named Marshall's head coach in 2007. He inherited a program that had struggled since joining Conference USA in 2005, and quickly changed the culture surrounding the Herd. Less than three years later, Jones led the Herd to one of the finest campaigns in program history.

In 2009-10, Marshall went 24-10 and advanced to the second round of the CollegenInsider.com Tournament. The appearance was the first trip to the postseason in 22 years. Marshall finished the year 11-5 in Conference USA play, tying the Herd for third in the league and serving as the school's best conference finish for the program since 2000-01. Jones' squad began the tournament with a victory over Western Carolina, giving Marshall its first postseason win since 1967.

Marshall had one of the most prolific offenses in the country and led C-USA in scoring at 79.9 points per game. The team also paced the league in field-goal percentage (47.8) and scoring margin (+10.9). Marshall totaled a school-record 2,717 points during the campaign.

To help accomplish the impressive turnaround, Jones attracted several top recruits to Marshall, including Hassan Whiteside, who led the nation in blocks in 2009-10. The post player swatted 182 shots - the fourth-most in NCAA history. Whiteside was named both the C-USA Freshman and Defensive Player of the Year, and garnered Freshman All-America Second Team honors from The Sporting News.

Both Whiteside and Tyler Wilkerson were selected to the 2009-10 All-C-USA Second Team. Dago Pena, who was also recruited by Jones, was named the league's sixth man of the year.

In three seasons at Marshall, Jones compiled a 55-41 record. After arriving in Huntington, W.Va., in 2007, Jones led the Herd to a 16-14 mark during his inaugural campaign, giving Marshall its first winning season in seven years. He guided his team to victories over a pair of eventual NCAA Tournament squads in San Diego and Winthrop, and helped Marshall go 8-8 in C-USA play. In 2008-09, Marshall went 15-17 overall and 7-9 in league games.

Prior to Marshall, Jones served for 11 years as an assistant coach at Florida, helping the program claim a pair of national titles and make three trips to the Final Four. Working as an assistant under Billy Donovan from 1996-07, Jones helped Florida win back-to-back national championships in 2006 and 2007. He played a key role in Florida's recruiting and player development that led to a school-record nine-consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances, four Southeastern Conference Eastern Division titles and three SEC Tournament crowns.

Florida recorded a 261-103 mark during Jones' time with the program. The 2006 squad defeated its six NCAA Tournament opponents by an average of 16 points en route to the national title. The following year, Florida became the first team in 15 years to repeat as national champions.

A native of Point Pleasant, W.Va., Jones excelled on the recruiting trail while at Florida. During his time at the school, the program signed 11 McDonald's High School All-America selections and boasted top-five national recruiting classes on five occasions.

Jones helped recruit and mentor 12 NBA Draft picks while at Florida, including Al Horford, Corey Brewer, Joakim Noah, David Lee and Mike Miller.

Before moving to Florida, Jones served on the Marshall staff for six years, the first two as a graduate assistant. During the final two seasons of his tenure as an assistant at Marshall, Jones worked under Donovan, who later took the head coaching position at Florida. Prior to his arrival at Marshall, Jones worked for two years as an assistant at his alma mater, Pikeville College in Kentucky.

Jones earned his bachelor's degree in business education from Pikeville in 1988, and received his master's degree in sports management from Marshall in 1992.

Jones had a stellar college playing career at Pikeville, recording a school-record 513 career assists. He served as the team's captain as a senior and finished second nationally in the NAIA with 10.7 assists per game.

Jones is married to the former Michelle Gibson of Salt Rock, W.Va. The couple has three children: Madisyn Michelle, Sofie Louise and Donald Isaac.