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## White Draws From Mentors, Past Success In New Role



Photo by Keith Morris.

Denver White is Payson's new varsity boys basketball head coach.

By **Keith Morris**

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Denver White likes to win as much as the next guy.

But that's not what it's all about for the new Payson High boys basketball coach.

White, 43, said one thing drives him as coach.

"I really care about the kids," he said. "I don't care if they play Division I (college) basketball, but I want them to be good men. I want them to play basketball and love the game. I want to instill great values."

That point of view comes from those who coached him. He mentioned Dan Reid, Chuck Hardt, Jim Quinlan, Dennis Pirch and Max Foster.

"I wouldn't have been the quality of young man or athlete without all these coaches I've had," he said.

But two people stand out as perhaps his biggest coaching influences.

One is Hardt, the 2016 Payson High Hall of Fame inductee.

"He was my coach his last year and my freshman year," White said. "I model my coaching after him a lot because he taught me basketball."



He said he'd look to Hardt for help when he needs it this season.

The other big influence on him as a coach was his grandfather, former Mesa Community College basketball, baseball and tennis coach Lot Christensen, who is known as the Father of MCC Tennis.

"He was my biggest influence in basketball," White said. "He's where I got most of my instruction in the summer and throughout my life."

White starred in football, basketball and track before graduating from Payson High in 1991. He was all-conference as a power forward in basketball and finished second in the state meet in both shot put and discus in track.

An offensive lineman and all-state linebacker in football at PHS, he played one season of football as a middle linebacker at Dixie State University in St. George, Utah before leaving on a church mission.

White takes over for Joe Sanchez, who stepped down after leading the program for five seasons.

He spent four seasons with his wife, Jennifer, as varsity girls basketball co-head coach through the 2013-14 season. She's now the Rim Country Middle School principal.

He's been the JV football head coach and a varsity assistant the last five seasons. He'll return to the track team as the coach for the throwing events for a fifth season this spring.

He and Jennifer have five children — Austin Young, 21; Korben, 17; Savanna, 15; Emmy, 13; and Kaden, 9.

The new coach wants to get the varsity, JV and freshman teams on the same page.

"At all three levels we're making sure we're doing a motion offense and a man defense," he said. "We're running the same thing from the freshman level all the way up to the varsity."

Jermaine Harris takes over as the junior varsity coach. He'll serve as White's varsity assistant. Steve Perry is the new freshman coach.

A promotional banner for Pampers 3X drier. It features the Pampers logo, the text "3X drier\*", and a "Get Coupon" button. There is also an "AdChoices" icon. Small text at the bottom reads: "\*Based on Size 3 vs. a leading value brand. Avg. 0.19 grams less after 3 typical wettings over 15 minutes."

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