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Dantonio Resigns UC Head Coaching Position

CINCINNATI, Ohio -- University of Cincinnati Director of Athletics Mike Thomas has accepted the resignation of Head Football Coach Mark Dantonio, who has been named the new head football coach at Michigan State University.

"I want to thank Mark, Becky and their daughters for all of their contributions to the UC community" said Thomas. "Mark has done an outstanding job in leading our football program for the last three seasons and he will be missed. We still have action on the field this season and are excited for the opportunity for our seniors to be able to put the Bearcat jersey on again and hit the field for the University of Cincinnati."

Thomas added that "We will move forward with a national search and will begin the process immediately. I ask that all Bearcats remain steadfast in their support of our student-athletes as we continue our season with the bowl game. The future for Cincinnati Football is very bright."

Dantonio, who was named head coach at Cincinnati on Dec. 23, 2003, compiled an 18-17 record during three seasons on the job. This year's team compiled a 7-5 record against a schedule rated second most difficult in the nation. UC won four of its last five games, including a 30-11 upset of No. 7 Rutgers, to qualify for a bowl, the determination of which will be announced next week.

"Leaving UC is a hard decision for our family" says Dantonio. "The last three seasons have been incredible for us as our staff has been able to get Cincinnati Football back on track. I want to thank Mike Thomas and Dr. Zimpher for their incredible support. Michigan State is a special place for me and I cannot think but of one other opportunity that would have been tempting for us. Cincinnati did everything to step up, financially and otherwise, that I asked to help move the program forward. This was a very difficult decision."

"I look forward to watching the team hit the field at the bowl game and bring a win back for our seniors and for this program. The next head coach will inherit a strong program and a great bunch of kids," added Dantonio.

"Mark Dantonio has been a tremendous leader for the young men in our football program and as a head coach has raised our collective expectations and goals," said President Nancy L. Zimpher. "We appreciate everything that Mark has done for the program and our student-athletes and wish him all the best in the future."

Mark Dantonio at a glance

Born: March 9, 1956 in El Paso, Texas

Wife: Becky

Children: Kristen (13), Lauren (11)

High School: Zanesville (Ohio) High

College: South Carolina (BA 1979)

Ohio University (MA 1981)

Coaching Experience:

2004-06	University of Cincinnati	Head Coach
		Record: 18-17
2001-03	Ohio State	Defensive Coordinator
1995-00	Michigan State	Secondary, Assoc. Head Coach
1991-94	Kansas	Secondary
1986-90	Youngstown St.	Secondary/Def. Coord.
1985	Akron	Secondary
1983-84	Ohio State	Graduate Assistant
1982	Butler County (Kan.) C.C.	Defensive Coord.
1981	Purdue	Graduate Assistant
1980	Ohio University	Graduate Assistant
1979	Anderson (S.C.) Westside High	Asst. Coach

Coaching Highlights:

- 2006—Cincinnati, 7-5 vs. the most difficult schedule in the country, bowl eligible.
- 2004—Cincinnati, 7-5, finished second in C-USA and won the PlainsCapital Fort Worth Bowl.
- 2003—Ohio State 11-2, No. 4 in final polls; No. 1 nationally in rushing defense (60.5), No. 9 in total defense (290.1) and No. 13 in scoring defense (16.8).
- 2002—Ohio State 14-0, National Champions; No. 2 nationally in scoring defense (13.1) and No. 3 in rushing defense (77.7).
- 2001—Ohio State team No. 1 in Big Ten in passing defense and No. 2 in scoring defense.
- 1999—Michigan State ranked No. 7 in final polls; MSU ranked 12th nationally in the final defensive statistics.
- Youngstown State made three NCAA Division I-AA playoff appearances during Dantonio's tenure there.
- Coached in 15 bowl games, including the 2002 Fiesta Bowl national championship.

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