

# Bone done at WSU

*AD fires men's basketball coach after five seasons*

**Tom Hager, Moscow-Pullman Daily News**

After five years without an NCAA tournament berth, Washington State Athletic Director Bill Moos fired men's basketball coach Ken Bone on Tuesday.

Moos has not named a replacement, although he likely started looking weeks ago.

"We were struggling and the attendance was as low as I've ever seen it - not only here but in any Pac-12 venue," Moos said. "That's when I started to think nothing short of a miracle, like going to the Pac-12 tournament and winning it, would probably change my mind."

Moos said he came to that conclusion about three weeks ago.

Bone finished his tenure with an 80-86 record overall, but he had only 29 wins against 62 losses in Pac-12 play.

"I've got to say that I've felt all along that Ken was a good coach and certainly a great guy, but it just wasn't working," Moos said. "The record reflects that, certainly the attendance at our home games reflects it, and I felt that it's time to find new leadership and go a new direction."

Bone suffered his worst season this year, as the team went just 10-21 and 3-15 in the conference. As the losses continued to mount, attendance began to plummet. Only 3,142 people showed up for WSU's final game against UCLA, and 5,796 fans came to watch the Cougars play Washington. Conversely, WSU averaged roughly 10,000 fans during its three games against the UW under Tony Bennett.

Bone had several unfortunate circumstances surrounding his tenure. First, before he ever coached a game in Pullman, he knew he would have to follow Bennett, arguably the most successful coach in WSU history.

Bone also had to deal with the departure of Reggie Moore for violating team rules before the 2012-13 season. Moore was expected to have a solid season after averaging 10.2 points per game as a junior. His dismissal left WSU without a point guard, forcing Bone to find awkward replacements in Mike Ladd and Royce Woolridge.

This season began the same way as Danny Lawhorn was suspended indefinitely for a violation of team rules and subsequently left the school. The lack of a point guard again was obvious as WSU finished 335th in the country at 62.4 points per game.

However, Bone said after WSU's last game of the year the cupboard was hardly empty heading into next season.

"There's some young kids in Ike (Iroegbu) and Que (Johnson) and even though Josh Hawkinson did not play the last couple of games, I think he's going to be a big solid big in this league," Bone said. "Ike and Que are good. A kid that we recruited out of Seattle (Tramaine Isabell) was the MVP of the state tournament. He's a good player; he can really score."

However, it remains to be seen if Isabell will still be with the program. Isabell told [CougFan.com](http://CougFan.com) he would talk with his family about what's next, but for the moment he was still a Cougar.

As far as letting any recruits decommit, Moos said he will make each decision on an individual basis.

"I would have to look into each one of those very carefully. Certainly I've been through these things before, and when I meet with the team, which I will do when they return from spring break, there's going to be all kinds of anxiety," Moos said. "When you're playing for a coach that recruited you, who knows your skills and is many times like a father figure, the reactions can be many."

To help ease the transition, Moos said he has placed Curtis Allen as the interim coach.

"What's going to be important for Curtis to do is make sure there's a calming of these young men, and that they understand that I take very seriously my role of finding them a new coach, and that they deserve to be playing in a full gym and playing at this time of the season, which is the postseason," Moos said. "It hurt all of us that are involved on the program to go into that building of ours and see it empty and the effect that it had on our players."

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