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## Gamble to leave Prairie Stars for Providence

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**THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER**

Posted May 27, 2010 @ 12:24 AM

Last update May 27, 2010 @ 05:58 AM

By all indications, University of Illinois Springfield Prairie Stars men's basketball coach Kevin Gamble is leaving the school to join the staff at NCAA Division I Providence College in Rhode Island.

"We are talking," said Gamble in a telephone interview from the Boston area on Wednesday. "There's nothing set in stone."

The head coach at Providence is Keno Davis, the son of Tom Davis, Gamble's college coach at the University of Iowa.

Gamble is in discussion with Providence.

"There's only one position open," he said. "The position is (coordinator of) player development. It's like a fourth assistant."

Each Division I program is allowed three assistant coaches, who can leave campus to recruit. Coaches can have other personnel on staff who fulfill other duties.

Providence's 2009-10 season ended in a 109-106 loss to Seton Hall in the first round of the Big East Conference Tournament and a 12-19 overall record. A 4-14 conference record placed the Friars next-to-last in the 16-team conference.

Gamble has East Coast ties.

He lived there when he played for the Boston Celtics from 1988 to 1994 during an 11-year NBA career that included stints with Portland, Miami and Sacramento. His wife, Alesha, is a native of Boston, which is located 41 miles north of Providence, R.I.

A move out east would take Gamble away from his hometown and the UIS program he helped create.

Gamble, a Lanphier High School graduate, is UIS' only head men's basketball coach in the program's eight-year history. He has compiled a 130-79 career record since he took charge of the new program in 2002.

He led UIS to a respectable 11-13 overall record in its first season of NCAA Division II competition and a 7-11 Great Lakes Valley Conference mark. The men's basketball team carried the banner for UIS' in its first year in Division II and had the best season of the school's 10 sports team.

The Stars left the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics and American Midwest Conference in 2009.

Under Gamble, UIS won the AMC tournament during the 2005-06 season and advanced to the NAIA national tournament where it lost in the first round. He was voted AMC Coach of the Year that season and the next. The Stars won the AMC tourney again in 2007 and made it as far as the second round of the national tournament before losing to eventual champion Oklahoma City.

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