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Magicians End Season with Coach of the Year and Second Leading Scorer in the SIAC Conference  
*"Put God first, stay focused and you will make the right choices."*

Coach Edward Newton, Assistant Men's Basketball Coach, has been chosen as Coach of the Year by the SIAC Coaches and players. Coach Newton says that he is honored to receive this recognition which came in his first season at LeMoyne-Owen College. When Coach Gaines got sick earlier this year, Coach Newton was asked to take over as Head Basketball Coach. At that time, the team record was one and seven. Newton's challenge was to try to get the team back on track. "The guys pulled themselves together and started to believe in one another, and we turned it around and started winning," Coach Newton said. Coach Newton believes the change in the team's confidence started when they returned home after a 1-win, 2-loss road trip to start the second half of the season; then won four straight consecutive wins on their home court over conference rivals Stillman College, Tuskegee University, Clark-Atlanta and Morehouse college which led the Magicians to an undefeated record on their home court second semester. "We moved from next to last place in the SIAC Conference up to second place and that was pretty good. I am really proud of this team," Coach Newton said.

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**Coach of the Year: Coach Edward Newton**

When the SIAC sought nominations for players and coaches of the year, Coach Newton was surprised that other coaches nominated him as Coach of the Year. “I am appreciative to Coach Gaines for giving me the opportunity to work with this team. I wanted to let him see that he had made the right choice when he hired me as his assistant. My style of coaching is to play fast and hard consistently and to show the players what makes them successful on the court. This gave the players more freedom, and in turn, they played harder.” Coach Newton said he believes that the key to winning was the perseverance of the players in addition to guard Maurice Mickens. “I think the team began to see how athletic and how fast we really were. I showed them an offense that exposed all of that, and we kept building on our success. We had only two true freshmen, some transfer players, and only three players from last year’s team. But, we also had Rasuul Buluu, a 6’5” Junior Forward, a great player from Booker T. Washington High School. Rasuul was named second leading scorer in the Conference and received the first Team All Conference award.

Coach Newton was nominated along with Coach Fred Watson from Benedict College; Coach Patterson from Kentucky State and Coach Jacobs from Clark Atlanta. Rasuul Buluu had been nominated along with thirty-one other players.

Newton graduated from Rust College in 1996. He lived in Memphis for a short while before moving to Coffeyville, Kansas where he worked as a conditioning coach at a local high school. In 1999, he was named Assistant Basketball Coach at Labette Community College in Parsons, Kansas. After coaching there for three years, he returned to Rust College in 2004 as Assistant Basketball Coach working with Coach Rodney Stennis.

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**Coach of the Year: Coach Edward Newton**

In August 2006, Newton moved to Lane College as their second Assistant Basketball Coach under Dr. J. L. Perry. In 2007, Coach Newton joined the LeMoyne-Owen College Athletic team as Assistant Basketball Coach to Coach Smokey Gaines.

“I think that I formed a bond with the team; they seem to like my style of play and how I constantly challenged them to play hard. It was a pretty smooth transition because they already knew about me. “I really think that this team can do well, because we were able to finish second in the SIAC Conference which is the highest seed that LeMoyne-Owen College’s Basketball team has been able to achieve since 2000,” Coach Newton said. “I want the College to continue its current success. We should have 10 players returning so I think we can carry it all the way to a Conference Championship next season. We just need to add a few players to some of our key spots, and we’ll make another run at it.”

The Magicians lost in the semi-finals of the conference tournament to Tuskegee in double overtime.

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