# Former KU assistant Robinson announces retirement

By Henry Greenstein hgreenstein@ljworld.com

Arizona assistant men's basketball coach Steve Robinson. who spent eight seasons at KU in two separate stints working under Roy Williams, announced his retirement on Thursday.

"After more than 40 years of coaching and mentoring young men from around the world, I feel it is the right time for me to step away and spend more time with my wife, our kids and our grandkids," Robinson said in a press release. "Coaching has been my passion from the day that I started and I want to thank each and every former player, coach or manager for the impact they have made on my life. There are so many lifelong friend- most successful seasons



ARIZONA ASSISTANT COACH STEVE ROBINSON during the first half of a game against BYU on Feb. 22 in Tucson, Ariz.

take away from college basketball, I could never begin to list them all."

Robinson left Cornell to join Williams at KU in the helm. He became part of several of the Jayhawks' ships and memories that of the era, including the and then Florida State for

my family has been able to 1990-91 team that lost to Duke in the title game in Indianapolis and the 1992-93 squad that reached the Final Four in New Orleans.

Robinson then received 1988 for his first season at head coaching opportunities at Tulsa for two seasons, where he imme-

five years with one NCAA Tournament appearance.

out to be Williams' final year at the helm of the program — the 2002-03 season that ended with another loss in the title game, 81-78 to Syracuse, again in New Orleans — and was one of the assistants who left with Williams as he returned to North Carolina in April 2003.

Robinson then spent the following 18 seasons — by far the longest single stint of his 42-year coaching career — assisting Williams with the Tar Heels, working in scouting and recruiting and with the UNC guards, and winning three national titles along the way. He was inducted into the A Step Up Assisdiately preceded Bill Self, tant Coaches Hall of Fame

After Williams' retirement, Robinson moved to He briefly returned to Arizona for his final four Lawrence for what turned seasons, even making a return to Allen Fieldhouse in March.

> "We are grateful that Coach Robinson and his family took the chance on me and moved to Tucson to help a first-time head Arizona coach coach," Tommy Lloyd said in the release. "From the first day, he brought a wealth of knowledge and experience that few coaches in the country have. His remarkable career has spanned four decades and some of the best basketball players in the game, which speaks to him as a person and a coach."

A native of Roanoke, Virginia, Robinson attended Ferrum College and then Radford, where he started his coaching career in 1983.

## **Bray**

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The junior is the second transfer KU has added at that position, after Leroy Harris III from Chattanooga, and fourth overall this spring, given that the Jay-hawks have also recently secured commitments from cornerback Syeed Gibbs (Georgia Tech) on Thursday and offensive tackle Enrique Cruz Jr. (Syracuse) on Friday.

Given his size, Bray will have a solid opportunity to compete for playing time at strong-side defensive end behind Texas transfer Justice Finkley, whereas Harris most likely provides another option on the weak side to go with starter Dean Miller, after fellow edge rusher Bai Jobe became the only player to leave KU during the spring portal window.

#### **NFL**

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Dominick Puni, another tackle at KU who previously started opposite Cabeldue and then moved to guard in the pros, went in the third round to the San Francisco 49ers in the 2024 draft and became one of the top rookie linemen in the NFL.

Prior to Saturday, the Seahawks had not selected a Kansas football player since quarterback Frank Seurer in the 1984 supplemental draft of players from the United States and Canadian football leagues; their last KU pick in the NFL Draft proper was linebacker Terry Beeson in 1977.

Former Jayhawks Logan Brown, Cobee Bryant and Mello Dotson were potential picks who now have an opportunity, along with Luke Grimm and Quentin Skinner, to be signed as free agents.



KANSAS RUNNING BACK DEVIN NEAL (4) celebrates a touchdown against Texas with teammate Bryce Cabeldue (77) on Nov. 13, 2021, in Austin, Texas. Both players were drafted into the NFL on Saturday.

### Cruz

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The Jayhawks have three surefire starters in center Bryce Foster, right guard Kobe Baynes and stillyoung left tackle Calvin Clements, but they were relying on longtime backups James Livingston and Nolan Gorczyca to fill voids at left guard and right tackle, respectively, during the spring.

Tulsa transfer Jack Tanner, a rising sophomore, then took Gorczyca's place after Gorczyca had finger surgery. UCLA transfer Tavake Tuikolovatu is also in the mix and has played both guard and tackle in the past.

Cruz could compete right away to start at right tackle. He is KU's third transfer addition in the spring window after Chattanooga defensive end Leroy Harris III and Georgia Tech defensive back Syeed Gibbs.



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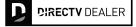
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