

Mitch Rolls



Labette Community College

5th Season



Mitch Rolls - 5 seasons at Labette

<u>Year</u>	<u>Overall</u>	<u>NR</u>
15-16	2-25	N/A
16-17	25-7	15
17-18	23-6	10
18-19	21-11	9
19-20	25-4	2
Total	96-53	

For the first time in a decade, the Labette Cardinals women's basketball team has won a Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference title and earned a bid to the NJCAA Division II National Tournament.

Fifth-year head coach Mitch Rolls, who took over the helm in July 2015, was named the KJCCC Women's Division II Coach of the Year after guiding Labette to its fourth-straight 20-win season.

Rolls, a Coffeyville, Kan., native, is in his first collegiate coaching position. Prior to his tenure at Labette, Rolls spent one season as the boys' varsity head basketball coach for Altoona-Midway High School. Graduating from Colgate University in 2013, Rolls spent a season playing professionally in eastern Europe before eventually getting into coaching.

In his first five years at Labette, Rolls has amassed a total of 96 total wins; 20 of those wins have come against nationally ranked opponents. That includes a Jan. 30, 2018 win over Johnson County, who was ranked No. 1 in the nation at the time.

Over five seasons, Rolls has coached 14 All-KJCCC selections, 11 All-Region VI selections, three First Team NJCAA All-Americans, two Academic All-Americans and three NJCAA All-Star selections.

This season, Labette nearly swept the Jayhawk All-Conference awards by having the Player of the Year Denijsha Wilson, Defensive Player of the Year Diamond Jones and Rolls winning Coach of the Year. A total of six Labette players (Denijsha Wilson, Diamond Jones, Jessica Martino, Angel Williams, Jayla Smith and Jordan Chiles) earned All-KJCCC selections.

The 2019-20 NJCAA Division II All-Region VI selections were just as favorable for Labette as it saw four players selected. Denijsha Wilson was a First Team selection, while Diamond Jones, Jessica Martino and Angel Williams were all Second Team selections.

Denijsha Wilson, a 5-foot-3 point guard from Philadelphia, Pa. was a First Team NJCAA All-American for Rolls and Labette this season. Wilson averaged 11.8 points, 4.2 rebounds, 3.1 assists and 1.5 steals per game for Labette this season. Wilson's defining moment this season undoubtedly came during a three-game stretch in mid-February against nationally ranked conference opponents, Kansas City Kansas, Highland and Johnson County. The Philly native earned NJCAA Division II National Player of the Week for shooting a blistering 75% from the 3-point line, 65% from the field while averaging 22 points a game and leading the Cardinals to three crucial conference wins.

Wilson joins a short list of Cardinals players selected as First Team All-Americans since Rolls' takeover in 2015. Upe Atosu, a 5-foot-9 guard from Nigeria, is currently attending Butler University and playing in the Big East Conference. Atosu was a First Team All-American in 2017-18 after averaging 19.4 points, 3.7 rebounds, 2.2 assists, and 1.8 steals per game. Atosu was also tabbed as the KJCCC Freshman of the Year (2017-18), KJCCC Defensive Player of the Year (2018-19), and earned back-to-back All-KJCCC & All-Region VI selections.

Rolls' first All-American, Tyra Jones, was a Division I transfer and Detroit, Mich. native that earned a First Team NJCAA All-American selection after her dominant play in the 2016-17 season. Jones, a 6-foot forward averaged 17.4 points, 5.4 rebounds, and 2.1 assists her sophomore season. Upon graduating from Labette, Jones went on to play at Emporia State where she was an NCAA Division II All-American selection, as well as MIAA All-Conference selection. Jones spent this past season playing professionally in Spain where she averaged a double-double.

In Rolls' first season at Labette (2015-16), Labette only had six scholarship athletes on the rosters. The Cardinals had a 2-25 overall record and failed to win a conference game. The next four seasons, Labette went on a tear, winning 94 of its next 122 games and finishing in the top 15 of the NJCAA Division II poll every year.

The team finished 25-7 in Rolls' second year in 2016-17; that gave the Cardinals the No. 15 spot in the final national polls. In 2017-18, Labette went 23-6 and finished No. 10 in the final polls. In 2018-19, Labette earned a 21-11 overall record while finishing that season ranked No. 9 in the country. This season (2019-20), Labette tallied a 25-4 overall record which earned them the No. 2 ranking in the final national polls.

The 2019-20 season was the first time since Rolls took over that Labette got over the proverbial hump to win the KJCCC title and the NJCAA Region VI Tournament. The region title punched Labette's ticket to the NJCAA Division II National Tournament, which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Labette's road to a conference championship was a brutal one as four of the six teams in the KJCCC were ranked in the top 10 of the NJCAA polls throughout the season.