

About D.J. Byrd

The 2022-23 season will be D.J. Byrd's 4th season as part of the Mercer Bears men's basketball program and 3rd as an assistant coach.

Byrd was elevated to assistant coach from Director of Basketball Operations in late July 2020.

In his first season as an assistant coach, Byrd helped Mercer make its first trip to the Southern Conference title game. The Bears finished 18-11 overall after jumping out to a 6-0 start for the first time since 1966-67, and in the former Purdue standout's second game as an assistant coach, Mercer topped Georgia Tech, 83-73, on the road. Byrd mentored Mercer's guards and helped Neftali Alvarez lead the team in both points (13.3) and assists (4.2) per game. Alvarez's 113 assists ranked second in the SoCon and 69th nationally, and as a team, the Bears finished the season 11th overall with 479 assists. Guard Ross Cummings also reached a pair of milestones, surpassing 1,000 points and 200 made three-pointers. He finished the season with 1,244 points, the 16th-highest total in program history, and 246 three-pointers. Cummings ended his time with the Bears only 11 treys away from surpassing Langston Hall's school record. Both Alvarez and Cummings were All-SoCon selections, while Alvarez and another guard that Byrd guided, Leon Ayers III, landed a spot on the conference's all-tournament team.

The Crawfordsville, Ind. native spent the 2019-20 as DOBO and was in charge of all logistical aspects of the program including but not limited to travel arrangements, practice schedules, overseeing all undergraduate and graduate managers and ensuring that team needs were met.

Byrd spent the 2017-19 seasons as a graduate assistant for the 2019 NABC National Coach of the Year, Matt Painter, at Purdue University. The Boilermakers won the 2019 regular season Big Ten Championship and had the school's first NCAA Tournament Elite Eight appearance since the 1999-2000 season.

Before joining Purdue as a graduate assistant, Byrd was the JV basketball coach and varsity assistant at Franklin Community High School from 2015-2017. He aided coach Brad Dickey and staff to back-to-back (2016, 2017) Mid-State Conference Championships and helped the team win the conference title outright (2017) for the first time since the 1986-1987 season.

During that same time at Franklin, he owned & operated RIMROC Basketball, an organization that provides Indiana youth with training opportunities, league games, tournaments and team camps. He also was the Director of Operations of Robbie Hummel Basketball Camps (2017, 2018) as well as Dakota Mathias Basketball Camps (2018).

Byrd returned to his alma-mater, North Montgomery High School, as a volunteer assistant coach for the 2014-2015 season. There he helped coach Joel Grindle and staff to a Montgomery

County Championship and Sugar Creek Classic Championship. Byrd was able to coach his cousin, Grant Gayler, who earned a scholarship to play at Bethel College.

As a player, Byrd played the 2013-2014 season professionally in Germany with the Kirchheim Knights in the Pro A League.

A former standout on the hardwood at Purdue, Byrd played in 130 career games, scoring 890 points and making 195 three-pointers, the 11th-most in a career in school history. Byrd was the Big Ten's Sixth Man of the Year in 2012 and helped lead Purdue to three NCAA Tournaments as a player (2010, 2011, 2012). In 2010, Purdue won the regular season Big Ten Championship and went to the Sweet Sixteen before falling to the eventual NCAA National Champion Duke Blue Devils.