**Jim Williams**

**Hall of Fame Class of 1988**

**Director of Athletics (1965 to 1968)  
Head Coach – Men’s Basketball (1954 to 1980)  
Assistant Coach – Football (1955)**

Jim Williams, also known as Jimmy Williams or “J.J.” was unquestionably the greatest basketball coach in school history and continues to hold the school record for most wins by a men’s coach at 352. Williams came from Utah’s Snow College after Coach Bill Strannigan left Colorado A&M following the 1954 season. Williams built on the success of Strannigan’s teams and led his teams to conference championships in 1960 and 1961 while bringing CSU to the NCAA Tournament in 1963, 1966 and 1969. Some of his best teams competed when CSU was left out of a conference as an independent.

Following the death of Athletic Director Bob Davis, Williams took over as the athletic director in 1965 and continued to coach his basketball team. Williams oversaw the construction of Moby Arena and Hughes Stadium before returning to the head coaching job full-time at the beginning of the 1968 school year.

Williams’ best performance in the NCAA tournament came in 1969 when the Rams reached the Elite Eight after defeating in-state rival Colorado in the Sweet 16. Although the Rams lost to Drake in the Midwest Regionals, it remains the furthest any CSU men’s basketball team has reached into the NCAA tournament. Williams died on May 31, 2007 at the age of 92; he continued to attend CSU basketball games into the 2007 season before his health declined.

Other Accomplishments:

* Colorado Sports Hall of Fame (1990)
* Coached All-American Bill Green
* Winningest basketball coach in state collegiate history
* Led Rams to two NIT tournaments

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