

= Sydney Johnson =

Sydney Johnson (born April 26 , 1974) is an American college basketball coach and the current head coach at Fairfield University for the Fairfield Stags men 's basketball team . Previously , Johnson was the head coach at Princeton University from 2007 to 2011 where he led the Princeton Tigers men 's basketball team to the 2011 Ivy League Title and the 2011 NCAA Tournament . A 1997 Princeton alumnus , Johnson played for the Tigers from 1993 to 1997 .

As a player he was a member of the 1995 ? 96 Ivy League champions and undefeated (in conference) 1996 ? 97 Princeton Tigers . He earned Ivy League Men 's Basketball Player of the Year recognition for the undefeated 1997 team . He continues to hold the Ivy League record for consecutive three point shots made and the league record for most single @-@ game three point shots made without a miss as well as the Princeton Tigers record for career steals . His college career was marked by many memorable overtime performances , game @-@ winning shots and game @-@ clinching free throws . Nonetheless , his greatest recognition came for his defense .

During a seven @-@ year professional career , he won three championships in Europe . After being hired in 2007 , he has been the youngest coach in the Ivy League for his entire four @-@ year tenure there . In his fourth season , he coached the 2010 ? 11 Princeton Tigers men 's basketball team to a league championship . Previously as an assistant he was part of the 2006 ? 07 Big East Conference champions .

= = Playing career = =

Johnson spent much of his childhood in Baltimore . He played his sophomore and junior season of high school basketball at Moorhead Senior High School in Moorhead , Minnesota . Johnson transferred from Minnesota to Towson Catholic High School prior to his senior season . During the early signing period from November 13 through November 20 , 1991 , Johnson , who was considering several Ivy League schools as well as Northeastern University , verbally committed to Boston University . On December 1 , 1991 , Boston University announced that Johnson signed a letter of intent . During his senior season , Johnson lead Towson to the Baltimore Catholic Basketball League Championship . Following the season , he earned Baltimore Catholic Basketball League All @-@ league first @-@ team recognition . He was also selected to participate in the Rodney Beasley East vs. West All @-@ Star Games , sponsored by the Baltimore Metro Coaches Association . He was also a second team All @-@ metro selection and following his 1992 graduation attended the Fork Union Military Academy in Virginia for a postgraduate year . In April 1993 , after playing a year at Fork Union , Johnson signed a letter of intent with Herb Sendek 's Miami (OH) team , but upon being accepted by Princeton University in June of that year , he revoked his letter .

Johnson showed strong leadership skills early at Princeton and is the only three @-@ time captain in university history . During his freshman year , he was twice named Ivy League Men 's Basketball Rookie of the Week for the 1993 ? 94 team . That season the 11 ? 3 Tigers could not match the Penn Quakers who were led by Jerome Allen and Matt Maloney . Johnson provided heroics for the 1994 ? 95 Tigers on a couple of occasions . On December 27 , 1994 , he hit what The New York Times described as " a falling @-@ down 3 @-@ point basket with three seconds left in regulation " . The basket forced overtime . At the end of the third overtime period Johnson converted two foul shots with three seconds left to cement a 71 ? 66 victory over Texas A & M. Later that season , he set a career @-@ high with a 25 @-@ point performance against Harvard in a double @-@ overtime victory . He recorded seven steals in a game against Brown on February 3 , 1995 , which is one shy of the school record . Again the Tigers could not get past Penn .

As a junior , he was named Ivy League Player of the week for the second weekend in February as he led the team on both ends of the court . The following week , he posted 21 points against Yale , which established his season @-@ high . Even after Allen and Maloney graduated , Princeton 's only two losses were to Penn . After Princeton and Penn ended the 1995 ? 96 season tied as Ivy League Co @-@ Champions , Johnson made the decisive three point shot with one minute and four

seconds remaining in overtime in the one @-@ game playoff , corralled a defensive rebound , added a pair of free throws with 24 seconds left and then made a steal . The win ended an eight @-@ game losing streak to Penn . The win earned the team the conference automatic bid to the 1996 NCAA Tournament and following the game head coach Pete Carril announced his retirement . The thirteen seeded team was matched against the defending national champion UCLA Bruins in its first round pairing . He was the team 's leading scorer with 11 points in the 43 ? 41 first round victory over UCLA in the 1996 NCAA Tournament . The team fell behind 41 ? 34 with over six minutes remaining . His 3 @-@ of @-@ 7 three point shooting performance included a shot to bring the team to within 4 . He also made the game @-@ tying layup to knot the score at 41 . He also defended Toby Bailey 's last second shot after Princeton took the lead with 3 @. @ 9 seconds remaining . During the game , UCLA jumped out to a 7 ? 0 lead at the first TV timeout , and Johnson 's leadership held the team together early when UCLA looked strong .

As a senior , his new head coach , Bill Carmody described him as a shutdown defender . He was 1997 Ivy League Men 's basketball Player of the Year . Johnson earned the award for his defense and was the first winner with a single @-@ digit scoring average . He scored 15 on February 22 , when Princeton clinched the Ivy League regular season championship by defeating Dartmouth . The following week , he established Ivy League records for most consecutive three @-@ point field goals made , with 11 , and the most single @-@ game three @-@ point field goals made with no misses (6 for 6) against Columbia Lions men 's basketball on February 28 , 1997 and Cornell Big Red men 's basketball (first 5) on March 1 , 1997 . He had twelve points in the regular season finale during which Princeton tied the school record with its nineteenth consecutive win . In the 1997 NCAA Tournament opening round matchup against the Cal Bears , when a final second pass was intercepted , he attempted to shoulder the blame with the press . He retired as the Princeton University all @-@ time leader in steals . His 169 total steals were fifth in Ivy League history at the end of his career and was eleventh at the end of the 2009 @-@ 10 NCAA Division I men 's basketball season . He retired second in Princeton history in career three point shots and fourth in career assists .

After writing his senior thesis on Kenyan education under British colonial rule and graduating with a bachelor 's degree in history , Johnson declined the postgraduate scholarship that he was awarded and played five years in Italy followed by two in Spain . Johnson played professional basketball in the Lega Basket Serie A and Legadue Basket in Italy and Liga Española de Baloncesto in Spain , one season each for Gorizia Pallacanestro A2 , Viola Reggio Calabria , Adecco Milano / Ducato Siena , Casademont Girona and Montepaschi Siena . He played two seasons with the Avellino in Italy from 2000 ? 2002 . He had a seven @-@ year professional career before becoming a coach . In 1998 , he won an Italian Second Division championship as a starter for Gorizia Pallacanestro . In 1999 , he earned another league championship with for Reggio Calabria , and in his final professional season in 2004 he earned a league title with Siena . With Reggio Calabria , he teamed with Brent Scott , Brian Oliver , and Manu Ginobili to win a championship .

= = Coaching career = =

= = = Georgetown = = =

Johnson was then brought on as an assistant to the newly appointed head coach at Georgetown , John Thompson III in 2004 . The team was coming off of a losing record and made it to a 2005 National Invitation Tournament . The team reached the Sweet Sixteen round of the 2006 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament . During his tenure at Georgetown , he helped coach the team to an overall 72 ? 30 record over 3 seasons and the 2006 ? 07 team the 2007 Big East regular season championship , the 2007 Big East Men 's Basketball Tournament championship , and a trip to the Final Four of the 2007 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament .

= = = Princeton = = =

When Scott abandoned his struggling Princeton team to coach at Denver in 2007 , athletic director Gary Walters hired Sydney Johnson to take over the program . Johnson emerged from a field of Princeton offense veterans that included Mike Brennan , Robert Burke , Craig Robinson , Bill Carmody , Armond Hill , Chris Mooney , and Mitch Henderson . Johnson 's demeanor as a coach is said by players to be more benevolent than his predecessor , Joe Scott , who left for the University of Denver after compiling a losing record in three years at Princeton . He was regarded as an inexperienced coach because he only had three years of experience as an assistant coach . He became the youngest coach in the Ivy League . Johnson inherited a team that had gone 2 ? 12 in conference the prior season and 38 ? 45 overall during the prior three season . Among the lowlights that the team had achieved during the Scott era was a 21 @-@ point performance that tied the record for fewest points since the inception of the three point shot and the shot clock . The team had ranked last in the nation in scoring in both 2006 and 2007 . Although race is an issue among collegiate coaching ranks , in Johnson 's first year , he was one of six African @-@ American men 's basketball head coaches in the 8 @-@ team Ivy League . Johnson employs the Princeton offense . Former Tiger stars Brian Earl and Scott Greenman were among Johnson 's assistants at Princeton .

After a tumultuous first season of rebuilding during which it posted a 3 ? 11 record , Princeton began to show great improvement in 2008 ? 2009 . Even with only three games left on their schedule and a 7 ? 4 conference record , they still controlled their own destiny for a possible postseason bid . They finished 13 ? 14 with an 8 ? 6 record in the Ivy League , which tied them with Yale for second place . Along the way , the Tigers defeated Fordham , UNC @-@ Greensboro , and Lehigh during their non @-@ conference schedule and also notched wins over Harvard twice . One highlight of the season was an early season victory over eventual Ivy League champs Cornell who had possessed a 19 @-@ game Ivy League winning streak . The Ivy League does not name a coach of the year in any sport , but Collegeinsider.com named Johnson Ivy League Coach of the Year .

During Johnson 's third season , the 2009 ? 10 team rebounded from a 2 ? 4 start to win 20 of its final 25 games and earn a berth in the 2010 College Basketball Invitational . Princeton 's 22 wins were its most since 1999 , as were its two postseason wins , and the postseason berth was its first since 2004 . In the March 17 , opening round game at home , Princeton defeated the Duquesne Dukes 65 ? 51 . The game was Princeton 's first postseason appearance since the 2003 ? 04 team went to the 2004 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament and the first postseason victory since the 1998 ? 99 team won two games in the 1999 National Invitation Tournament . On March 22 , the team defeated IUPUI 74 ? 68 in double overtime at IUPUI Gymnasium in Indianapolis , Indiana . The Tigers had previously won in the postseason in Indianapolis when the Johnson @-@ led 1995 ? 96 team pulled off a first round upset of the national defending champion UCLA in the 1996 Tournament . In the tournament semifinals the team was defeated by Saint Louis University 69 ? 59 at Chaifetz Arena in St. Louis , Missouri on March 24 . Johnson again earned Collegeinsider.com Coach of the Year .

In 2010 , Johnson tweaked the motion Princeton offense to be a bit more uptempo , resulting in more possessions and higher scores . On March 5 , 2010 , the 2010 ? 11 team had a chance to clinch an outright 2010 ? 11 Ivy League men 's basketball season championship , but lost to Harvard who clinched a share of the title . Following the game , Johnson made his team sit on the bench and watch the Harvard fans celebrate . On March 8 , Princeton defeated Penn to force a one @-@ game playoff at the Payne Whitney Gymnasium in New Haven , Connecticut . On March 12 , Princeton earned the Ivy League 's automatic bid to the 2011 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament , making the NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament for the first time since 2004 and 24th time in school history by defeating Harvard 63 ? 62 . Princeton was awarded the number thirteen seed and a first round match against the Kentucky Wildcats . Kentucky had eliminated Ivy League representative Cornell the prior season . Kentucky emerged victorious by a 59 ? 57 margin on a last second layup . He was named as a finalist for the Hugh Durham Award , the Ben Jobe Award , and the Skip Prosser Award .

== Fairfield ==

In April 2011 , Johnson accepted a head coaching position at Fairfield University , replacing Ed Cooley . He coached the 2011 ? 12 Stags to the semifinals of the 2012 CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament where they lost to Mercer , after defeating Yale , Manhattan and Robert Morris to finish with a 22 ? 15 record . Mercer went on to win the tournament . For the second season in a row , he was a finalist for the Ben Jobe Award . The 2012 ? 13 team started the season 10 ? 10 (2 ? 6) before winning five consecutive and seven out of eight Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference games . The team then lost its two final conference games to finish 9 ? 9 in conference . Eventually the team finished 19 ? 15 (9 ? 9) .

== Personal ==

Johnson 's history professor father , LeRoy , divorced from his mother when Johnson was young . He grew up in a series of college towns . Johnson 's father played basketball for Indiana in the early 1960s . He was also one of the first Americans to play professionally in France . His brother Steve was on the California Bears team that defeated the two @-@ time defending champion Duke Blue Devils men 's basketball team in the 1993 NCAA Tournament . While at Princeton , Johnson was a member of the Cap and Gown Club . Johnson met his wife Jennifer (née Zarr) Johnson when they were freshmen in Princeton 's Wilson College . When he was initially hired by Princeton the couple had two children : 2 @-@ year @-@ old son , Jalen , and newborn daughter , Julia .

Johnson had been very involved with the university as a whole during his head coaching career , participating in a task force charged with surveying the impact of Princeton 's eating clubs on campus life , and sitting with his players in the student section at many home football games .

== Head coaching record ==