

Big Ten Basketball Media Days

Thursday, October 7, 2021

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Rutgers Scarlet Knights

Women's Associate Head Coach

Tim Eatman



TIM EATMAN: On behalf of President Holloway; Pat Hobbs, our athletic director; Andrew Kappers, our women's basketball liaison; and our head coach, C. Vivian Stringer, I'm honored today to be here at Big Ten Media Day.

This is my third time in this role at Rutgers. The first time was when Coach Stringer lost her mother. The second time was when Coach took a leave of absence because of exhaustion. I am so thankful that this time has nothing to do with neither one.

Now, if you all know Coach, she's always asked of you to do the almost impossible. Right before I left, she said to me, Tim, do not let this press conference be about me. Keep the press conference focused on the players and the team.

I said, Okay.

I took a deep breath and I said to myself, Good luck with that, Timothy Eatman.

But here we go.

We're so excited about this year's team. Glenn Cain, our strength and conditioning coach, has done an amazing job with our players this summer and in fall workouts.

Thirteen of our kids have never had an opportunity to do a summer workout and a fall workout at Rutgers. Last year Coach Stringer decided not to bring our team back until mid September because she wanted to be sure that all of our players were safe.

I want to take a second to tell Commissioner Warren and the Big Ten staff that we're so grateful how you handled the COVID-19 pandemic. Words cannot even express how we feel about what Pat Hobbs and his medical staff did during the daily grind every day. We're better because of them.

Now, we've only had four practices; so I can't sit up here and tell you who is going to play Arella Guirantes, I can't

tell you who is going to be the player that is going to be our defensive stopper because at Rutgers we start over with every team. Coach Stringer goes right back to the basics, whether it's a team that played in 2001 that went to the Final Four, team in 2007 that went to a Final Four. We start with the basics because we want to give every team an opportunity to be the best team that they can possibly be.

Now, three of our returners that have been here for three years, they understand the daily grind that you have to have in the Big Ten, the best conference in college women's basketball. They've had an opportunity to see in the three years they've been here two teams finish third in the league and another team that finished tied for fifth in the league. We're depending on Tyia, Joiya, and Stephanie to make sure our younger players understand the Rutgers way. We want to make sure we develop with our team the toughness you need to have in order to be successful.

I want to take a few minutes to talk to you a little bit about what I think is going to be the game changers for Rutgers. Name, image and likeness and the transfer portal is here to stay.

Now, our goal and our motto in the previous years has always been: life after basketball. We always have talked as a staff about developing our players as pros and developing them as pros in basketball or pros in corporate America. But now that has changed. The players have an opportunity to take their name, image and likeness.

So what we're trying to do now is to make a shift, the shift from life after basketball to now, right now. How do we help our players build their brand so that they can be the best they can be today?

If you're familiar with women's basketball, two young ladies from Fresno State women's basketball team launched their campaign with name, image and likeness. Do you know where they did that? In our backyard, 45 minutes away from our campus at Rutgers University. They came to Times Square to launch their campaign. We have got to do a great job in helping our players develop their brand in



the media capital of the world.

These two things are going to be a game changer for us as Rutgers because we believe that with New York and the opportunity that our players have with different corporate companies, that we can be very successful with this.

We have two players here I hope you get a chance to meet, Osh Brown and Lasha Petree. Osh Brown is the all-time rebounder from Ball State. She reminded me last night that she's also the single game leader with 23 rebounds in one game. Lasha Petree is on the Naismith watch list last year. Had 33 points against Texas in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

Two outstanding players, but more importantly two outstanding people. They are great kids. I'm sure you're going to enjoy them if you get an opportunity to meet them. If you don't, I know you'll enjoy watching them play on the court this year.

Any questions?

Q. Your experience in 2019, I think it was seven games as acting coach, is that something you look back on now? At what point do you believe this might be a permanent thing or a long-term thing that goes into the season?

TIM EATMAN: Well, since you've been around our program a long time, and you know that Coach always has one voice. Right now the plan hasn't changed, but the voice is mine right now.

The one thing that Coach always believes in is that you can only have one voice because you don't want to have confusion with the players. Her favorite statement is, when you ask her, "Coach, when do you want me to do this," she always looks at you and says, "Yesterday."

We want Coach back yesterday, but we understand that she's trying to find a way through this pandemic. Our best bet is to continue to move forward, but continue to do the things that Coach will always do. Our staff is really excellent in the fact that we never dilute what Coach wants done and we never pollute what Coach wants done.

Whether it's tomorrow, whether it's next month, or whether it's for the first game, Coach has an opportunity to do what she needs to do because she knows she has a staff at home that's going to take care of business.

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