

# Big Ten Basketball Media Days

Thursday, October 7, 2021

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

## Nebraska Cornhuskers

Women's Head Coach

### Amy Williams



AMY WILLIAMS: I just want to start by thanking everyone for being here. Say a great huge thank you to Kevin [Warren] and the entire Big Ten staff for putting on this amazing event. It's awesome to see everybody in person. I could not be more excited about being back into arenas with fans in the stands this year and seeing people's faces.

Big Ten women's basketball is going to be maybe the best it's ever been this year. I really am expecting unprecedented results from the Big Ten Conference this year, from the league as a whole when you look at what we've done in the past, the number of returning players. It's really an exciting time to be a part of this conference.

We have plenty of reasons to be excited in Nebraska women's basketball right now. Number one, we have four returning starters from our team one year ago that Kevin mentioned, was able to knock off five ranked opponents and play in the post-season. We have four other returning players who played substantial and significant minutes in our program. We're adding in a top 25 recruiting class that consists of six players total, five freshmen and one transfer from the University of Oregon, Jaz Shelley. A lot of reasons to be excited for the program.

Probably the number one reason I'm excited is this team has really just embraced competition with each other. They have a strong, strong belief. They believe in hard work. I just absolutely love coaching this team.

I'm excited to answer any questions that you have at this time.

**Q. As an up-and-coming team, you're moving forward. What do you look for in players and staff when building a team?**

AMY WILLIAMS: In our program we just want to be the hardest-working team on the court. The most competitive and the grittiest and the toughness. I think that's the number one thing we're looking for in the players we're adding into our program.

I think my coaching staff has been with me for a very long time. The whole entire time I've been at Nebraska. They really have a strong understanding of what it is that works for us. I think they know that the number one factor for us is that grit and toughness and hard-working type of player.

**Q. Obviously the NCAA tournament is the ultimate goal in every team in this league. Can you enjoy watching the tournament when you're not in it?**

AMY WILLIAMS: It's not quite as enjoyable (laughter). I can appreciate what's going on. I love good basketball. I think my entire life March Madness has been kind of a special time of year that I get excited for. It's so much more enjoyable to be a part of that, be experiencing that firsthand. So that's something we're on a mission to make sure we're there.

**Q. You took over for Connie, who did a great job at Nebraska, great winning program. How long did it take you as a coach to get your feet settled and head the program in the direction you wanted it?**

AMY WILLIAMS: There's a definite transition period, no doubt about it. I think the one thing we've just tried to embrace is the history and tradition and the things that Connie was able to do for our program, and find small ways to just see if we can't keep raising the bar for our program. That's our goal every year, is to find ways to raise the bar and build on what has been built before us.

**Q. Kevin came out here and said at the beginning 52% of the Big Ten network's live programming this year will be dedicated to women's sports. What does that media attention mean for the growth of the game?**

AMY WILLIAMS: Well, it's really kind of hard to put into words just how important that is. To have a leader that really understands that, and right now we're at a very pivotal time in women's basketball. I think there are a lot of people that are paying attention to finding ways to grow our game.

I'm grateful that we have a leader in the Big Ten Conference that understands the importance of that and is



willing to put his actions behind his words. I think we're going to see a lot of good things come from his commitment there.

**Q. When you say it's a pivotal time, why is now so important?**

AMY WILLIAMS: I think because right now the nation's attention is on women's basketball. I think one year ago there was a lot of attention drawn and brought to women's basketball in some of the ways and areas that we were not kind of matching up or doing everything we could for our student-athletes and for our sport.

It's a great time when that attention is grabbed nationally across the country to make change.

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