

University of Delaware Women's Basketball Media Conference

Monday, May 15, 2017

Chrissi Rawak Natasha Adair Press Conference



MAGGIE HAYON: Good morning, all. We have director of athletics Chrissi Rawak and new women's basketball coach Natasha Adair.

CHRISSI RAWAK: I'm going to go ahead and get started. Well, it's a great day. It is a great day for the University of Delaware, for Delaware athletics and our women's basketball program and all of the people that have contributed to the successes of the past and who love this program, and I can't tell you how excited I am to have Coach with me today and her lovely daughter, as well. It was an incredibly competitive process. We had unbelievable interest, but at the end of the day, there was no question in my mind that Natasha was the best choice for us.

Everything that we looked for in our head coach, she brings, and more, and I'm excited to share more with you about that, but I'll turn it over to her, as well.

NATASHA ADAIR: Thank you. Thank you, Chrissi. Like Chrissi said, it's a great day. And when you think about just this opportunity, you think about why Delaware, why me, why now, and I say why not, but it starts with just the leadership, you know, from President Assanis down to Chrissi, and then the vision. You want to be a part of a historic tradition, be a part of a program that is no stranger to success or national prominence, but just now with the leadership, and me being in this role as the head coach, I'm excited to continue that tradition but take it to new heights.

CHRISSI RAWAK: Me too. (Laughter.)

Q. I think the obvious question many people probably have is Georgetown is a Big East program, high level of basketball; why would you leave a program like that to come to a mid-major, CAA, Delaware, a conference you know a little bit about from being at Charleston for a couple of years?

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, and that is a good question, and I think that in the scope of women's athletics and

understanding that the CAA conference is a very competitive conference, as well, but it goes along the line of just the leadership and the vision and knowing the history of Delaware women's basketball. We may be in a conference that's considered mid-major, but this is a program that has been on the national scene, and so the foundation is right and the leadership in my opinion is right, and so it just -- it was the perfect decision for me, one for me and my family, but also a very good professional decision.

Q. Did you feel like maybe there was a ceiling at Georgetown that maybe here there's a little bit more room to grow, evolve?

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, not necessarily a ceiling. I just thought that our vision aligned, and I think that's important. You have to know along your journey you're going with the right people that share your vision, so I don't think it's right or wrong. I just think that this fits.

Q. Do you feel like maybe there's more potential here, that maybe you kind of hit the ceiling there, or you'd taken them as far as they could go, that maybe there's a little bit more potential here?

NATASHA ADAIR: No, I just think that this is just the Delaware way, and I wanted to be a part of it.

Q. You built the Georgetown program that went from four wins to .500. What can you take from building up that program to here, to a program that's kind of plateaued in the last few years?

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, I think the biggest thing is the women came here to win. They came here to be a part of that winning tradition, and so the cupboard isn't bare, but I think you have to -- for me, we go in and we talk about how we get there. You know, the CAA is very competitive, and I think what we have from a team aspect and then what we do as far as development and implementing the system that I think will fit the players, and then I think it'll be just a very competitive and fun game to watch.

So I think there's several components to getting there, but the necessary tools are already in place.

Q. Natasha, having played Delaware the last couple of years, knowing something about the team, did that kind of help you with your decision to make this move?

NATASHA ADAIR: It did. You know, honestly, it did, and just the atmosphere. Our alumni base, our fan base, just being in the Bob Carpenter Center, it's electric, and I can't lie, you want to be a part of it. So I do have an inside scoop, thought, a little bit, about competing, and I did pull out that scouting report to just know what we have and what we have to work with. But I'm excited to get started.

Q. Yeah, you do have kind of a nice team returning, and I know you probably haven't had a whole lot of time yet to sit down and analyze that, but personnel-wise, do you feel kind of like you have something really to kind of build on here?

NATASHA ADAIR: I do. You know, but I'm looking forward to sitting down with the players and just talking about that vision and building that plan together.

Q. Have you had a chance to meet the players yet?

NATASHA ADAIR: Not yet. Not yet.

Q. It's not a secret around here that maybe some of the players weren't perhaps thrilled with the manner in which they were being coached; maybe they thought it was a little bit tough. How will you try to perhaps rectify that or create a better environment?

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, first and foremost, I'm going to be me. And again, I think sitting down with them and just kind of talking to them and just listening, because I think as a coach, for me, I'm a players' coach, so each coach is no different than how you parent, and I think learning them and figuring out just what motivates each student-athlete, and it's all differently, but I think that's a question I can answer better later as I assess them and just kind of figure out who I am as a coach. I'm passionate. I'm energetic. My energy is contagious. I want to get excited about every aspect of the game, and I want that to trickle down to my team.

Will we hold them accountable? Absolutely. But I'll be the first one to praise them, as well. So I think it'll be a great balance.

Q. You have a busy week this week, don't you?

NATASHA ADAIR: I do.

Q. When do you head out to Colorado?

NATASHA ADAIR: Wednesday. Get on a plane, head out to Colorado Springs for USA Basketball.

Q. What did that mean to you to be selected for that, and how will that help you as a coach, help you develop as a coach, and how is that something you can kind of bring back here to help the Blue Hens?

NATASHA ADAIR: Absolutely. I was very -- just excited

when I got the call from Carol Callan, who works with USA Basketball. Being selected, just they picked two court coaches out of all the coaches in the country, and that's an honor and a privilege, and I just want to be a sponge. To be in the realm of just all those great coaches, and then the players, phenomenal players and talent, but just to be a sponge and absorb as much as I can and absolutely -- all coaches do, all we do is steal from each other. We all think we reinvent the wheel and we don't, so whatever I can bring back and just implement, but it'll be just a great experience to be in the Olympic facility with some of the best talent and some of the best coaches in the country.

Q. When you got to Georgetown, what were some of the challenges there that you had to kind of deal with to rebuild that program?

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, any time you're rebuilding, you have to put your stamp on it. But the first thing is you have to rebuild trust, and that's not lip service. That's something that's just the day-to-day grind of examples of communication, of just really investing in each and every student-athlete, and so just getting them to trust you and then giving them daily -- you have to have small victories until the ultimate victory, whether it's on the court, whether it's in the classroom, whether it's in the community, and so I think the first initial aspect is just building that trust, and that goes a long way with communication.

Q. You had to kind of rebuild the roster from scratch in many ways, didn't you?

NATASHA ADAIR: To a certain degree, yes, and recruiting is the pipeline of what we do. Here I think that once I sit down and assess kind of what you have, but I don't think the cupboard is bare at all.

Q. Have you had a chance to talk to the players who have signed with Delaware that are coming in?

NATASHA ADAIR: Not yet. Not yet.

Q. Did you get a chance to talk to your Georgetown players yet?

NATASHA ADAIR: I have.

Q. What was that like, and what was the reaction?

NATASHA ADAIR: Well, any time -- it's tough. You know, you build that relationship, but at the end of the day, we talk about the intangibles of who they are and the goals that they have set and what they need to do to continue to see it through. You know, in this profession, players will graduate, as well, and so for me to be able to walk away, they are in great hands, very healthy culture, and I just expect great things from them, as well.