

Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Tipoff Media Day

Wednesday, October 7, 2026

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Notre Dame Fighting Irish Coach Micah Shrewsberry Ethan Roberts Braeden Smith Men's Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Notre Dame has joined us. Head Coach Micah Shrewsberry will offer an opening statement.

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: It's always a great time to be here in Charlotte when the ACC media days happens. You know that the season is right around the corner.

Excited about the ACC and where we're going and what we're doing as a league. I thought we took steps, and you see it each year with more bids, people getting better, teams getting better, our league constantly getting better, adding in new coaches.

Coaching in the NBA, I've seen Coach Malone up close and personal and know how great of a coach he is. It's a great addition to our league as well as, you know, Gerry McNamara coming back, Luke Loucks -- sorry -- Luke Murray being a great addition at Boston College; Justin Gainey getting a chance to go back home.

There's great coaches, great players that are coming into this league, so we're excited about where we're going as a conference.

I'm fired up for Notre Dame and what we're doing. In year four now with a new group of guys, can we take the next step, and that's what we're focusing on every single day.

We've had a lot of change within our program, but the theme that we've talked about as a team is we want to be built by believers. I think that starts with our coaching staff and the guys that stuck around that believe in something and believe in what we can do as a group at Notre Dame and what we can do in this conference.

But the guys that joined us, too, have that same belief, and they saw something in us at Notre Dame that said, I want



to be a part of that. If we have success this season, it will be because of the guys that believed in us.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

Q. You all are playing in the Eternal City Classic in Roma. What does it mean to play against Villanova in that Classic, and have you brushed up on your Italian yet?

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: That's such a unique opportunity, right? I talk about there's things that happen. We had one of the organizers come and talk to our team yesterday, and he just said it's a once-in-a-lifetime experience, because it's going to be.

We're going to be the first that gets a chance to do it. I don't know if there will be any other teams after us, but to have that game, that double-header, to play in Rome, to visit The Colosseum, to visit the Vatican, but to open the college basketball season is unique ask, and that just speaks to the power of our brand.

Q. You spoke about the new faces. I believe six transfers, four freshmen coming in. What is the chemical makeup of this team as you step forward and the positives that you are seeing?

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: I think Braeden Shrewsberry, I think Brady Stevens have done a good job of being the social chairs of our team I think from the summer all the way through now, just kind of having everybody together, getting everybody together. Us being intentional about learning each other off the court because I think all that stuff translates when you get onto the court.

We spend a lot of time, what we're doing, what are our strengths, what are our weaknesses, how do we play to our strengths more. We spent so much time learning each other on the court. I think that stuff is translating.

You'll see it. A lot of new faces, but some of the new faces were already familiar with what we were doing, what we were about, so it's been a very easy transition. We're a couple of weeks away. I can't wait for us to get a chance

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

to play somebody here soon.

THE MODERATOR: You speak to some of those new faces. One of those new faces has a familiar last name. What's it been like to have the kids on the floor, the Shrewsberry family?

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: That's obviously unique, right? I've been able to coach one son for three years now. Now having another that's a freshman is a little bit different, a little bit unique, but something that we're having fun with.

My biggest thing every single day when we leave is just make sure that something doesn't happen in practice and somebody calls Mom.

THE MODERATOR: Tony Rack joined your staff back in June, and you've reunited with Isaiah Thompson. You've got a solid mix of coaches that have been with you for a while as well as some newness. Describe that mix for us.

MICAH SHREWSBERRY: Yeah, I think, especially after last year, there was a lot of really self-evaluation, starting with myself and how I could be better to help our team, how I could grow to help our program, but also the guys that stayed, the guys that have been with me for a few years that we've worked together for a long time.

Then adding new faces, new voices, Isaiah Thompson was somebody that I had coached previously. He comes from Purdue University, which I have long ties to.

So bringing in some fresh ideas there, and then bringing in Tony Rack from Winthrop, and just same: Fresh ideas with what we want to do. I think that excitement and that exuberance really permeates throughout our entire team.

So having them, having new players, there's a freshness, there's a newness to what we're doing. Like I said, it started with me and doing some evaluation of how I could help our group be better, but bringing in some guys outside to give us some fresh ideas, but add a little jolt of lightning to us.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you. Questions for Ethan Roberts.

Q. Ethan, you transferred from Penn. What about the ACC and the power conference level are you most looking forward to playing?

ETHAN ROBERTS: Yeah, I'm just excited for every game just to burn with the brightest flames. I'm a really competitive person. We have a competitive group, so just being out there and competing with the best of the best is

enough for me and something I'm really excited about.

Q. You just said burning with the brightest flames. What does that mean to you, and why is Notre Dame the place for you to do that?

ETHAN ROBERTS: The ACC speaks for itself. Like Coach alluded to, there's a ton of bids in the tournament. I come from a one-bid conference, the Ivy League. I think it speaks for itself.

There's great teams. I think there's, like -- I don't know what their rankings are, but we probably have multiple four, five in the top 25, if not more, and that speaks for itself. Why Notre Dame? To me it's why not? This is my dream school. I love Coach Shrewsberry. I love this school, just being a student there, and I can't wait to compete with Notre Dame on my chest with my teammates.

Q. Coach Shrewsberry once described you as a great teammate that will add more leadership to this team. After making the NCAA Tournament with Penn, what can you learn from that experience that you can bring to this locker room?

ETHAN ROBERTS: Yeah, that's a good question. I think about it every day and try to carry it into practice, but one is just positivity. All teams that I've been on that have gotten to the tournament is they get better throughout the season. It's a marathon.

I try and instill that poise within our group, that leadership of just being calm and confident just because I believe we got the pieces from it the coaching staff downward. I'm really excited about this group. Whatever I can do to help from a leadership perspective or whatever it may be, I'm more than willing to do it.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ethan. Questions for Braeden Smith.

Q. Braeden, coming over from Gonzaga, what are the takeaways from the Bulldogs that you think can immediately have a positive affect at Notre Dame that you bring with you?

BRAEDEN SMITH: I would say just the standard of excellence. Obviously Gonzaga is a well known basketball university with great tradition, and just their urgency to get better every day and to have that excellent standard is something that I'm trying to carry over here.

THE MODERATOR: When we look at your career stats, you really like to share the ball. I'm curious, who or when did that team mentality really take hold in you?



BRAEDEN SMITH: The team mentality and pass-first or play-make first has been instilled in me at a very young age. Just growing up as a point guard, you know, my dad emphasized that point home to get others involved and try and make your teammates better.

THE MODERATOR: We heard that you are heading to Rome next month. What are you looking forward to most?

BRAEDEN SMITH: Honestly just spending time in a different country with my teammates. You know, those foreign trips are great experiences to build memories and grow tighter as a group, so I'm really just looking forward to that piece.

THE MODERATOR: First time overseas for you?

BRAEDEN SMITH: No, sir.

THE MODERATOR: This will be trip number what for you?

BRAEDEN SMITH: Three.

THE MODERATOR: Where were you before this?

BRAEDEN SMITH: We took a foreign trip to France at Colgate and then this past summer I actually just came back from Italy for a grad trip.

THE MODERATOR: Good food over there, right?

BRAEDEN SMITH: Yes, sir.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports