

Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Tipoff Media Day

Wednesday, October 7, 2026

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Syracuse Orange

Coach Gerry McNamara

Gavin Doty

Aiden Tobiason

Men's Press Conference



anticipate we'll be getting this year from the orange.

GERRY McNAMARA: Right from the start I wasn't kind of starting bare coming from Siena with a post-season run. Obviously Gavin, Frances Folefac, and Tazzy bringing those players with us and kind of getting that core group together right away.

Recruiting Aiden right after that, Garwey, you know, bringing Ryan Moesch, who was committed to us at Siena. We talked a lot about length, versatility on both sides of the basketball. I think that's what we've compiled.

From top to bottom there has to be some form of competitive nature to you, or you can't really play for how I coach. That's my style. That's what I demand.

The thing that we've always asked of the kids that we recruit is the respect and maturity. If they gave us those two things, we were going to get along just fine. That was very transparent in the guys we recruited.

I think for us trying to move the program back in the direction we know it's capable of going, you got to get the right group, the right core group, together.

I think we did an incredible job -- my staff has as well -- of this offseason putting together the right pieces to put a team together.

There's a lot of individual, great players out there. I think we've got great individual play that have meshed and gelled well together. Not just on the court, but off the court. I think that goes a long ways.

I've said it before, it's the character of the kids you recruit that help you set the culture you're trying to create. I believe that. We're not going to sacrifice that piece, and we've gone out and got high-character kids that are damn good basketball players.

Q. You talked a lot about your players. How do you believe -- how do you balance bringing in young talent with developing players over multiple years?

THE MODERATOR: We are lucky enough to have with us Syracuse in the room at this point. Coach McNamara will offer a few opening comments.

GERRY McNAMARA: Good afternoon, everybody. Excited to be here. I think you get to this stage -- I think every coach down here probably gets to this stage where you are looking forward to, you know, playing another opponent. I know the two guys to my left are.

You know, and this event, when you get to The Tip Off event it's usually the indicator that it's right around the corner. You look at this league, of how competitive it's going to be moving forward, you know, I was really lucky to play in some great leagues, coach in some great leagues. There's no more historic league than the ACC.

To get an opportunity to be the head coach at my alma mater in this league, the all-time winningest league of NCAA Tournament history. We've had six teams in the last ten years go on to Final Fours from this conference. So just really looking forward to it. Looking forward to competing.

We've got a great group back in Syracuse that have given us everything they've got so far. I think for right now it's about time we turn our focus into an opponent and kind of go from there.

Again, excited to be here. Excited to get this season going, and really looking forward to it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

Q. Assessing this roster, the assembly of it, just bring me into what this team looks like going in. A lot of new faces. I know the fans want to know what you



... when all is said, we're done.®

GERRY McNAMARA: It's a great question. Right now I think the hardest part of our job is forecasting the future ahead of time. I think that the most difficult thing for the coaches right now is we don't -- I don't know who is going to be here next year.

I know Aiden and Gavin can both technically come back and play for me next year. I just don't know if they're going to because they have -- they can make a decision every year.

For us it's about if I'm going to recruit a high school player, I've got to make sure that I have somewhat of a decent grasp of the future of what my program is going to look like and how it's going to mesh with the kids that I think I'm going to still have at the end of the year because I still believe in the development process.

That's how I cut my teeth in the business as an assistant coach is I put a great deal of time with the kids. I coached in development.

I don't want to lose that, especially if the rules change as we move forward. We've got to go back to recruiting high school kids and giving them the opportunity to come in and develop in a program and stay there.

Right now I think there's been a lot of pressure on a lot of coaches in college to make sure that they get old and get old as fast as they can, and that's really hurt high school recruiting. I think we understand it now at the top of we've got to get back to making sure that we give the high school kids who have been criminally under-recruited another opportunity to come in and get recruited at the level they deserve so they can come in and feel a family atmosphere in a program and be a part of that again if we can get it right.

Q. I appreciate and understand everything you're saying, but I want to add this question to what you are talking about. If there is one thing in particular that you can ask of your fan base to buy into for your up and coming season, what would it be?

GERRY McNAMARA: To be honest with you, I think the fan base at Syracuse, I wouldn't ask them to buy into anything other than anything they've always done, which is to support us and show up and show out.

I think Gavin Doty grew up in it. He was from the Fulton area. He wasn't far. He was at the games when he was a kid. They were supporting the program. Aiden just practiced, what was it, two days ago, A, where we practiced in The Dome for the first time and you get a feel for it.

The people of our area and the community have always come out and supported us. That's all I can ask. We've got to do the rest. I've got to give the rest of them that have stopped or walked away, I have to give them a reason to come back and support it. But the ones that have showed up year after year after year for 30, 40, 50 years, it's what's made Syracuse special.

Everything kind of revolves around the Hill, the university. Surrounding areas gravitate towards it, and it's why I chose to attend Syracuse out of high school.

The same thing that makes it special 25 years ago when they were recruiting me is the same thing that makes it special today. They are going to show up. They're going to support us, and we've got to give them a reason that the product on the court is worth supporting.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, thank you. Questions for Gavin Doty.

Q. You heard from Coach that you grew up supporting this program being in Fulton, New York. What does it mean to represent central and upstate New York, represent Fulton, not just Syracuse, but to be one of the upstate New Yorkers on this team?

GAVIN DOTY: Yeah, man, it's a blessing. I've been going to Syracuse games since I was 3 years old, so to have the opportunity to put on the orange jersey, I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. If you can take us through what it's like playing for Gerry. You've had a couple of years of that. What is it like? Is it intense? What does he ask of you, and how hard is that as player or maybe for some players maybe aren't able to do that? What is it like?

GAVIN DOTY: Yeah, you know, if you show up with respect and maturity like he said and work really hard at practice, the coaches are going to coach you. My two years at Siena, I haven't seen a player that didn't get better, so it goes to show with the growth and what the coaches can really do for you.

You know, it's a lot of fun. Obviously he's a winner. We turned around a program there at Siena, and that's the goal this year, is we're going to turn around Syracuse as well.

THE MODERATOR: What do you anticipate being that big difference between the league that you used to play in and now your time in the ACC?

GAVIN DOTY: Yeah, you know, I always say it's the same



dudes with different name across the chest. Obviously the physicality is a little bit more physical and the speed is probably a little faster.

But you know, at the end of the day, we're all basketball players, and I'm a competitor, so I'm just going to go out there and have fun and do what I do best.

Q. The last game before putting on Syracuse orange was against a team in this conference in Duke, and as a 16 seed you gave them everything within two possessions. What do you remember of that game, 21 points in 40 minutes, and what do you build off of?

GAVIN DOTY: Yeah, I mean, I remember a group of guys that poured their heart and soul into the team, and we gave it everything we had for a full 40 minutes. It was a lot of fun. We did come up short. Kind of looking ahead of that now, and I'm just really looking forward to getting Syracuse back to March.

THE MODERATOR: Gavin, thank you. Questions for Aiden Tobiason.

Q. Transferring from Temple, what is it about Gerry McNamara is and this program that made you believe this was the right fit? What spoke to you about Syracuse and his leadership?

AIDEN TOBIASON: I think we touched on it. He's won at the highest level and he keeps everything real. He's a players' coach. He's going to tell you what you need to hear and not what you want to hear. It's been great. It's been great learning from him.

THE MODERATOR: You played golf in high school. How do those skills in golf translate to today?

AIDEN TOBIASON: I would say the biggest thing is having that goldfish mentality. Like in golf you can't dwell on your last shot, I the same in basketball, you can't dwell on the last mistake you had. Whether it's good or bad, you have to look forward. That's the main thing.

THE MODERATOR: What's the best club in your bag?

AIDEN TOBIASON: I would say my 6-iron for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Why?

AIDEN TOBIASON: I like to hit it far, man. That 6-iron goes -- I think it goes, like, 205, 210, yeah.

Q. A little fun question. Can anyone on your team outshoot your coach in a three-point contest in

practice?

AIDEN TOBIASON: I got a lot of respect for him, but you know, I'm competitive, so I'm going to say me for sure (laughing). No, you know, he's shooter for sure, and we both know that, so...

THE MODERATOR: Aiden, your Instagram handle is @abugyy. Why is that?

AIDEN TOBIASON: A lot of people ask me that. When I was 3 years old, I was at the Philadelphia Zoo with my mom, and she's terrified of bugs. A lot of ladybugs, you know, land odd me on my shoulder, and she left me. She ran away, and she came back, and I was just sitting there just chilling. That's how she came up with "abugyy," yeah.

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