

# Atlantic Coast Conference

## Operation Basketball

Wednesday October 28, 2015

### Dennis Clifford

Boston College Eagles



**Q. Dennis, 52 points were lost from the crew from last year to this year. How do you fill in those point totals for this year?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: Well, we have a totally new and different team this year, and so I don't think we're really looking to just replace guys.

I think we've got a whole new equation this year with Eli. He's going to provide a lot of scoring, a lot of offense, a lot of positive aspects of the game.

I think myself, I think I've gotten better at a lot of things in the off-season, and we got new freshmen that can really contribute right away.

**Q. So it's not unsettling that you've got a brand new team? Some people would say that I don't know if I'm comfortable with that. Do you?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: No, I think it's rather exciting, just having a whole new group of guys that are real eager, like Eli said, to play and compete.

**Q. Dennis, the rebounding margin is obviously something that needs to improve for Boston College. How do you think with this new crop of kids, how well do you think you'll be able to crash the boards? Obviously the ACC is a very rebound-driven league. Thoughts going into that.**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: Well, yeah, it definitely is a very physical league. I think I took a lot of pride in that this off-season, just trying to get my legs back, trying to get stronger and helping other guys really want the ball.

**Q. How do you feel about your health? Forget what the doctors tell you; how do you feel?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: I feel great. Yeah, the doctors are on my side with that, too. Haven't had any problems so far.

**Q. Can you talk about Garland Owens just a little bit and the impact and the effect that he has with the team?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: Yeah, Garland is obviously a tremendous athlete, and he's been a really good warrior for us on both ends of the floor. I think this off-season he's gotten a lot better on getting himself involved in the offense because he's always just been a great person to have on defense.

**Q. Do you feel a sense of urgency at all given that you're one of the older guys, that you see the graduation stage on the horizon? Do you feel like it's now or never?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: Yeah, absolutely. I think you have that a lot with the fifth year guys and just seniors on the team. It's the last year. They call it the contract year.

**Q. Do you have to have a trophy to call the year a success?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: As a team, yes.

**Q. So no other variable will allow you to be successful other than a trophy?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: No, there can be definitely other variables, but --

**Q. Like?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: Like I think we're going to surprise a lot of people this year. I think we're going to have a very positive season, and there's definitely positive takeaways that you can have after every season. I think that's true.

**Q. What do you like about your new teammate in Eli?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: I'm really enjoying playing with him so far. He's really good at seeing the floor. He provides energy and leadership on both ends of the floor, and you can't really ask for a better point guard.

**Q. Tell me about coach's style. Obviously he was new to the program midway through your tenure. What do you like about Coach?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: I like his energy. He's real energetic and you can tell he's passionate about what the game is all about and what he's teaching to you. When he needs to get a point across, he won't let up. As he said, you've got to meet him up here, he's not going to meet you at your level. He really pushes guys to kind of reach new levels of their game.

**Q. But on the other side of that equation, I get the sense that he might be sort of father-like, that there's a fairness about the teaching?**

DENNIS CLIFFORD: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, the only reason why he would yell at you is because he

believes that you can do that. He's mentioned that to us as a team before.