

Big 12 Conference Men's Basketball Tipoff Media Day

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Arizona State Sun Devils Coach Bobby Hurley

Media Day Press Conference



BOBBY HURLEY: Coming off a disappointing season for us. We're looking to regroup. We're excited about our first season in the Big 12. It's obviously in my opinion the best basketball league in the country, loaded up top and really good depth of really quality programs.

Excited to experience all that, just new places, places I haven't been, haven't coached at, different areas of the country.

We worked extremely hard in the off-season to rebuild, reconstruct our roster, and put ourselves in the best position to be very competitive this year. I like what I'm seeing in practice, got some really -- I think we've upgraded our talent level significantly.

Excited to see where we stand. We had a nice closed scrimmage over the weekend, and we'll travel this weekend to play at Duke on Sunday and then obviously we're inside two weeks until our first game. Excited about everything.

Q. Can you talk about Jayden Quaintance and what he brings from a physicality standpoint and just being a 17 year old?

BOBBY HURLEY: So Jayden is special. What he's going to be a couple years from now is scary because he's already so advanced for his age, turning 17 in July, and he'll be one of the youngest players in college basketball.

But you look at him physically, he's prepared to compete at this level, and his makeup is outstanding. His habits are tremendous for a young person. He just is a worker. He's in the gym all the time.

He's immensely talented. For a guy with his size and stature, you would think he's just a bull around the basket or something, but he can face up and dribble the ball. He's got some finesse to his game, in addition to the physicality that he brings.

He's got a motor that is as good as any that I've ever coached, and I always prided myself when I played on being able to sustain minutes and be able to be a guy that can play 35 to 40 minutes without getting tired.

Jayden is far superior than I ever was in that regard or anybody I've coached. He just never stops. He's relentless and goes after the basketball, plays with tremendous energy and passion.

Very fortunate to have him in the program because obviously he easily could be in a high school classroom somewhere right now.

Q. Joining a new conference you've got to get to know 12 new teams, and I'm sure you've seen them on TV, probably played a few of them in non-conference. Did you have a process in terms of learning about these teams, getting prepared for this? What kind of work did you put in in the summer to get ready for all this?

BOBBY HURLEY: I would say that knowing that we were going to the Big 12, the reputation about it being a very physical league, more so maybe than West Coast basketball is perceived, I wanted to stick to what our style was going to be.

I wanted to be unique. I want us to play Arizona State basketball, and I don't want to try and be better than some of the top programs that have been great rebounding programs or tremendous defensive programs.

I'm not sure that I could, in a few months, become a better rebounding team than Houston. So I'm just going to try and be really good at what we're capable of being good at.

I think we've repaired our front court. It's probably the deepest perimeter that I've had since I've been at Arizona State. I've had some really good core perimeter teams here, but I think the depth of players that I can put on the floor, I have a pretty strong hand there, and it's a good mixture of experienced guys, returning players, and incoming freshmen.

So I really like what we have right now.

Q. You've got a stretch in January where you go to Cincinnati, then you go to West Virginia, three days later, come back to prepare for Iowa State, and then another road game. How have you prepared your team for these new trips that you're going to have to take in the expanded league?

BOBBY HURLEY: Well, we tried to do that already. We had a closed scrimmage on the road. We're traveling to Duke this weekend. We want to get our players accustomed for these road trips. We're playing four non-conference home games in our non-conference schedule. I'm not sure any other power conference team would play that little amount of home games.

We should be battle tested on neutral sites and on road games through -- certainly you could look at the Duke game this weekend and then you can move right to our game No. 1 at Gonzaga. We'll put ourselves in some challenging situations against some really good teams on the road, and hopefully that'll pay dividends as we hit our conference schedule.

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