

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Beth Goetz Jan Jensen

Women's Basketball Press Conference

BETH GOETZ: Good afternoon, everyone, and thanks for being here with us today. It's always a great day to be a Hawkeye. Today is another day we get to celebrate what it means to be part of the black and gold family. I want to thank you all for being here today and welcoming in a new era of Iowa women's basketball.

I'm so grateful to our outstanding student-athletes, alums, our incoming prospects, incredibly passionate fans and benefactors, and to our campus and community leaders for your unwavering support of this program. Your belief and commitment are what make this program so special.

Just a few acknowledgments as we begin. I'm thrilled to see Julie, Janie and Jack smiling with pride. It's great to see our women's basketball staff and athletics staff who work tirelessly for the success of this program. I want to thank President Wilson for being our biggest fan and for valuing the transformational impact athletics has on the educational experience of our student-athletes and the important role our department plays in furthering the mission of the university.

I also want to recognize Dr. Sue Beckwith, who was with us in the beginning and every step of the way ensuring that generations of athletes have the opportunity to experience what she did in a Hawkeye uniform.

Finally, Lisa Bluder, who inspired us all, made an impact on countless lives and mentored the amazing coach we are here to welcome today. She set a daily example of how to lead with character on the path to achieving excellence. I know she will always be our biggest champion.

This is a seamless passing of the baton. The definition of a true teammate is someone who embraces their role, commits to honing their craft with the sole expectation to serve those around them and make the team better. Jan Jensen has learned from the best, positioned the program for unprecedented achievements, and has been an integral component over the past decades in making Iowa one of



the most successful college women's basketball programs in the country.

Jan's journey has been entangled with the story of women's basketball in the state of Iowa for as long as most can remember. It was in her genes as her grandmother played six on six in the 1920s. I think I'm getting this right, Coach, was nicknamed "Lottie" for scoring lots of points. Jan carried on that tradition with her name still etched in Iowa high school record books. She then went on to become the nation's leading scorer, averaging 29.7 points per game and became an All-American at Drake University.

Her coaching career began after spending a year playing professionally in Germany, and she has never looked back. A presence on the court and off, known equally for the impact she makes on the game and for the authenticity and kindness she shares with all she meets, making them feel like lifelong friends.

A relationship builder, a relentless recruiter, a post whisperer, always ready for coffee and a conversation with an athlete, a champion on someone's most difficult day and on their best. She has always been leading, always been mapping a path for success for your Hawkeyes.

She embodies the culture of Iowa women's basketball that our loyal fans have come to know and love and will lead this new era of the program during a new era of college athletics with creativity, grit, passion and commitment needed to build champions on and off the court.

A head coach must have a deep understanding of the game, be a teacher at heart, understand how to build culture and inspire belief. They must be a role model, a motivator, and have an unrelenting competitive drive to be the best and bring out the best in all who touch their program.

Jan models daily what it means have a tireless work ethic, to lead with compassion and fiery passion and to be confident in who you are and how to go about chasing your dreams. Everything we needed in the next leader of this storied program was right here.

Under Jan's leadership, you will continue to see a team that plays with heart, with unmatched toughness, and plays



an exciting brand of basketball. We have a coach who welcomes high expectations, has an energy that inspires all those around her, and a contagious enthusiasm that will continue to flame the passion of her team and our fans across the state and beyond.

You've been all in here with us, and we are all in with you. How amazing is it when the easy choice is the right choice, and in Caitlin Clark's words, the only choice.

It's now my pleasure to officially welcome and introduce the University of Iowa P. Sue Beckwith Head Women's Basketball Coach, Jan Jensen. (Applause.)

JAN JENSEN: Thank you so much. Thanks for everybody being here and for always covering our program. I really appreciate it. It's a day, that's for sure.

First off, I want to thank Beth. That was such a lovely intro. Thank you to President Wilson for believing in me and for giving me this unbelievable opportunity. Honestly words certainly fail me, and those of you who know me, that doesn't happen often.

But truly, I'm really grateful and so, so excited.

I especially want to thank Lisa Bluder. She's great in every realm. Thank you for everything you've done for this program. Thanks for letting me be part of the ride here, and thanks for coaching me when I was at Drake and letting me be a part of that ride there and taking a chance on me at a young, young age. Thanks for everything you've done for women's basketball. You've impacted it so, so incredibly. I want to thank you for how you have impacted me and for kind of being part of the plan all those years ago and for believing in me, preparing me, helping me fan this dream and now to make it a reality. Thank you, and I love you.

I also want to thank Jenni Fitzgerald, another one of my best friends, one of the three amigas. I don't know how many years ago we started a group chat as three, and it's probably Jenni that named it that.

Jenni has way too often been an unsung hero always, always behind the scenes and never, ever has she gotten I think the credit or the shine that she deserves. She is an incredible coach. Her basketball acumen is really unparalleled, and she has helped me on this journey. She's helped me in so many moments in life. We've enjoyed so many fun moments, way back when we started as teammates at Drake. I'm just so thankful to have had this ride with you, and I just appreciate everything you've done, and I know so many times it could have been you different times in our paths, so I just want to thank you, and I love you. Both of you guys, what a ride it has been.

I also want to thank my incredible family. My spouse, Julie Fitzpatrick. Those of you who know me know how much I really believe in Julie and just the amazing person that you are, and you've sacrificed your own career coming back and everything that goes with coaching. There's no better teammate. You're the calm, the steady, the rock, incredible. To Jack and Janie, man, amazing kids. You understand the schedule, and you understand it's going to get even more intense likely. I just thank you for believing in me.

Jack is one of my biggest champions. Lisa, I don't know, she had the foresight or not, she had me be the head coach at our European trip, and the opponents weren't great, okay, but right after the trip, Jack said, mom, you're 2-0 as a head coach and your margin of victory is well over 50. I said, thank you, I'll remember that.

Both kids are really, really great and understand the schedule.

I want to just mention three people really that aren't here. They're actually watching from above. My mom, my dad, and my brother. You talk about fans, they were my biggest. They would have loved this day, especially in the small town. Those of you who are from a small town, boy, it's a big deal when you succeed in anything. Everybody in Kimballton, Iowa, I'm just so grateful. I've had so much support, my original hometown of Kimballton, living in Des Moines, from Drake, such great people, my friends here. I'm just so blessed. My parents really taught me a lot, gave me my foundation, and my brother. Before I ever had a coach, I had a brother. I'm really thankful for that. My sister, she's in Sioux City watching. I have a niece in Kimballton, Ashley, watching. They're really great family members and great supporters, so I've been really fortunate and want to give a shout-out to them.

I just have had a really incredible personal team starting with Lisa and Jenni all those years, Abby, Tania, Ben, they're here, Raina is on vacation, but everybody is with me. We've just had such a great ride, and now we're excited to do it together.

I think back on all the teams that I had at Drake I was part of, and the teams here at Iowa, and I want to give a special shout-out to those players. You can't mention them all by name, but every one of them really has a piece of my heart, and they were part of really pushing me to want to become a head coach.

I have had so many wonderful texts from players, and I haven't gotten to them all yet, but I will, and that goes for all of our great fans and my friends. I haven't gotten to those

texts yet because I'll tell you what, I've really focused on the people that can play for us now and in the future. That's where my energy has been.

But I promise you, the ones I have read have been just so heartwarming, and I look forward to getting back to those when I just get a little bit more free time to breathe.

In closing, I guess I'd just like to state that I love this state, and I cannot believe the journey I have had. Oh, boy. I always say, if God would take me tomorrow, I couldn't have had it better. A small town kid gets to play basketball, goes to the state tournament, gets a full ride, plays at another tremendous university in the state, gets to go to Germany, gets to win the German Cup, gets the GOAT like Lisa Bluder to believe in her, has incredible friendships and leaders that have mentored me, meet the love of my life and have incredible kids.

Then the last couple of years we just change the game. It has been a ride. I cannot tell you how I just am in awe of our fan base. You guys have backed us, and the way you've reached out to me taking over the reins, it's just not like that. It's not like that everywhere. As Beth said, it's seamless, and in that way, it really is.

There's been a big change, but most everything has remained the same, and that is that culture that Iowa has and Iowa is. It's that way administratively, academically. It's this way, our administration here.

I think everybody will tell you, we are just so fired up about Beth's vision, and that's why internally I'm so grateful to learn and grow under her.

This city, this state, there's a lot of people that could take this job, but I promise you nobody loves this place as much as I do, and I promise you, we've been working together for years tirelessly, and I will commit to that. I'm going to work my hardest to continue building on everything that Dr. Christine Grant started in her vision of this Athletics Department and Lark Birdsong started it, and obviously the Vivian Stringer years, and then certainly Lisa. It is not lost on me that I've gotten to have my dream job at a place that I love and now I get to have my dream title. Are you kidding me? And I don't have to move?

I am beyond blessed. I am beyond excited. I'm just in awe that I get to stand here in this capacity today.

I thank you for all the coverage you're giving us, and I so hope I'm part of some wonderful stories you'll get to cover in many years to come.

Q. Do you anticipate any internal moves with the

coaching staff, and with an assistant coach position open, have you decided on a timeline that you'd like to have to fill that position?

JAN JENSEN: No. Everything has been so fast really. I think about really the last six days of my life, it's been kind of crazy. But it'll be as quickly as we can with posting. Certainly I've had some thoughts and conversations, but I'm just thrilled that everybody is on board with the coaches that go out on the road to recruit and certainly video and player development.

We'll do that as quickly as we can, and I think any head coach would tell you that a new head coach, as soon as you get that done, you start to bring it in even easier. But we have some great, great possibilities I think that are interested, so hopefully that'll come to fruition.

Q. I wanted to ask you a little bit about the time of line when Lisa told you she was leaving and when did the conversations with Beth start about you succeeding her?

JAN JENSEN: Yeah, it's really been not more than a week really. I think Lisa had -- when we're recruiting a lot of people have always asked. I think anytime you're on an experienced coaching staff, that's always questions you have to face, whether it's from your competition that's trying to find a way to out-recruit you or get the recruits to think otherwise, but I think that's been the fun and the beauty of our staff is that we just went and we worked and enjoyed every step, and I think when Lisa got some clarity, I think someday Lisa will probably take some questions and be interviewed, but she just got some clarity.

I heard when everybody gets to that point of retiring, you know when you know. There was never, oh, after Caitlin leaves or after Megan leaves. There was never that. What I've always appreciated about Lisa is she just had a blast doing it. She always loved that competition.

I think when she had some time to -- I don't want to put words in her mouth, but just had some time to really center, I just think it became clear, so when it became clear, it was kind of a shocker because it was a little bit later.

When she came back and said, I'm going to bring you by some coffee, I said, oh, yeah. Jenni showed up, too, and I thought, what's happening here. But then after that point, we rolled. And I would say Beth within probably 24 hours just reached out to have a conversation.

Q. A lot of what made Iowa successful is having you as the associate head coach, and so a little bit of a two-parter here. How much do you expect your role,

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day-to-day role to change as just the head coach, and then two, to the extent that it does change, who's going to be your Jan Jensen?

JAN JENSEN: Yeah, well, that's a good question. I think that some of my strengths that I had I'll certainly carry over, just moving 20 feet down the hallway, right. But I think I haven't made the job description yet based exactly on the day-to-day.

I don't necessarily feel like what I do is going to change. I think that the name of the game for this level is you can't win the race if you don't have the horses, so it's a lot about recruiting and making sure that our game plan that we've always had remains seamless, as well, because now we need to get someone in here that can do that, fulfill the role.

I feel Abby, she was our player. The minute we could hire Abby, we did. Abby's loyalty to this university, Abby is a tremendous basketball mind, as well, but her people sense and her integrity, she'll be definitely greater than a Jan Jensen. She believes in this place. She actually played her. I don't feel we'll be short on that.

I feel that's what's made our staff so great is we've all been built on integrity and have a great synergy.

Raina is on vacation or she would be here. She's tremendous, too. I do not think we'll skip a beat there. We have to pick the right person that's going to be able to come in as a newbie and keep that recruiting synergy going, and obviously some of that strategy-wise, too, but those are things that we'll be looking at, the synergy, how they gel, and certainly bringing the things I'm working on in the job descriptions, looking for people to identify all of those things.

Q. I know Lisa talked to the players a lot about envisioning things. The last week or so since you've known maybe you might be in line for this, how do you envision this program looking under Jan Jensen leadership? Exact same as Lisa Bluder, differences, crowds? What comes to your mind when you think about that vision?

JAN JENSEN: I think whether our staff stayed intact from last year to this year, this year was going to look a lot different. It's going to be rebuilding in the sense of you graduated tremendous seniors, certainly a generational player like Caitlin. There will be fans that were Caitlin fans.

But I believe that a lot of people came for Caitlin, but they stayed for Hannah, they stayed for Sydney, they certainly stayed for Kate and Gabbie, but I think they stayed for

what that team and what this culture is.

This was the same culture when Megan Gustafson was here in 2019. We made it to the Elite 8 that year. But that same synergy and that same fun and that same joy. I think there's that saying tradition never graduates. I don't believe culture graduates. But you have to work on it. You have to recruit to it. You have to work at it.

I think that's what these amazing loyal fans will continue to do.

I think that whether there was a coaching change or not, even two weeks ago, the majority were so ready for this next season. They're curious. They're excited. They want to see what the next era was going to be. Two weeks ago I didn't know that it was going to be, quote-unquote, my era.

But the same vision that I had working with Lisa will be continuing. You want to do it at a high very level. You want to do it with integrity, never compromising your values, and you want to put a product on the floor that's fun to watch and fun to cheer for and fun to play. That will remain the same.

Now, how we do it, I'm not going to reinvent the wheel. We've had pretty good success. But I'm going to put my own little stamp on it, right.

We haven't ever full-court pressed before. I know Raina is a big proponent of that. So you might see a few things directly. If you read my bio at all, I like offense. That started way back in 1985, and it kind of stuck with us all the way. Lisa is a six-on six-girl, too, and so is Jenni, so there will be some different things. There's different sets that maybe when we had our coaching meetings, it's a collaboration. Some of the things that maybe I wanted to vote for, they got voted down. Well, now guess what: I'm going to give it my shot, right? I say that tongue in cheek (laughter).

It again, goes back to there's a big change, but a lot of the same things will remain, and I'm very proud of that.

I think all the Coach K disciples, Roy Williams disciples, whether they got to play at their place or go, you'd be crazy not to take some of what they instilled in you.

Lisa, I'm going to have her stay on in some capacity. She's going to help us, be an advisor. I'm excited that she'll be willing to do that. So thanks to her for that.

Q. I know you've had opportunities to go be a head coach before this day. How close did you ever come to taking one of those opportunities, and why did you ultimately play the long game, so to speak?

JAN JENSEN: That's the truth. I was thinking about that the other night. There's been double digit opportunities. Everybody is strategic. You get to a certain point in the interview process. Kind of like recruiting, if you feel like they're not in, then you shift. I'd say there was two, maybe three where I was like, ooh, kind of like maybe that's the one, maybe I should go.

But this doesn't work out often. You can take this risk and stay and stay and stay and then you don't get the opportunity. That's why I'm so grateful to Beth and President Wilson.

But I'm an Iowa kid. I believe in it. I believe my education at Drake University helped me become who I am. The way the people are in our great state, the way it feels over here.

I was never wired -- there's just two different ways to do it. Some people, they hop, hop, hop and they get back to where they wanted to go. Believe me, I had many conversations in my head and Julie and with our former AD Gary Barta. Grateful to him, as well. So at some point you have to be, okay, this is what I'm going for.

So about eight years ago, that's what I told Lisa. Now, some people had called, and I talked, but at the end of the day, there's no place I wanted to be. So that's why I feel grateful that it worked out. I don't know what the odds are in Vegas that it would work out again, but all I care about is right now.

Q. One of your roles has been being a good-cop, a back-patter. Do you see that changing? You have such a sunny disposition. It doesn't always translate well to a head coaching role. Do you see that changing at all?

JAN JENSEN: I think it has to. But it doesn't concern me. I feel like we have such good continuity staying that I know what Abby and Raina -- to be successful on a staff, you have to be like-minded, and there are some things, smaller things that assistants should take care of, and when they get to be the big things, they hit that office. So I've had a lot of experience on the small things.

I've been able to do it maybe with more of a sunny disposition, but you can probably ask a couple of the players and they wouldn't tell you all the time that I'm as sunny.

I feel like I've watched Lisa lead. I've watched many people in my life. But I also don't think you have to all of a sudden change and be this really burly hard disciplinarian just to prove to everybody, by God, we're going to do it this way. I don't believe you have to do that. I think when you lead,

you do it your way. I'm very confident that the way I'll be able to handle the times when I need to be the, quote-unquote, bad cop, I'll do it my way, and I'll be very confident that it will be received well. So I'm not worried about that.

Q. Do you have clearly defined goals on the court, off the court? Not immediate but for the whole time you're going to be doing this job?

JAN JENSEN: I think there's two ways that you can look at that. I haven't had time to sit down and look at your short-term goals and your long-term goals, which I will, and I don't always share those publicly, just like sometimes we don't always share what the team does because you can put it out there and when you come up short you get hammered. Sometimes that is within house.

But I think when you're chasing greatness, you want to be a champion. I mean, I don't think there's been one season, I don't care how much we've rebuilt, where we've gone in there and said, let's just try to finish fifth this year. I'm not wired like that.

Every year I want to be the champion of the Big Ten Conference. I don't think you can take this job if you're constantly looking at look, okay, let's just do this this big. Understanding it's a long game. It's not coach-speak, but I think we have some great pieces returning. I like who's coming in. I don't think that has to be a, oh, boy, that's a pie in the sky.

But we graduated quite a class and quite a player. So I don't think that I'm into like putting everything in this first year. I'm going to have a little longer term contract.

I want to chase greatness. My expectations of the players are going to -- they've been to back-to-back-to-back conference tournament championships. They've been to back-to-back national championship games. I'd like to think they're coming in with a mentality, little chip on their shoulder, because most everybody else is going to say, hey, you lost all that.

I'd say I'm not shying away to be great.

Q. We heard Beth talk about how great it was that the easy choice was the right choice, and when you talk about continuity in your program, how valuable will it be for you in your position to have that continuity when it comes to recruiting and things of that nature, to kind of just keep the juju going, so to speak?

JAN JENSEN: Yeah, great question. I feel very fortunate with that. As I alluded to, it's been a big change, but most

everything remains the same. Thankfully to our staff returning and to every one of our players, every committed player, everybody is here. Everybody stayed.

I just consider that on day one a really big win, that everybody was with me and with us.

I think that is nice, just the continuity, and I think it's great that Lisa agreed to be an advisor role. I don't know what we'll exactly call that. But she's going to be around. She built it. She loves it. She's going to be a great resource for me. I'm going to need a little bit of great from my team as we learn and grow, and certainly I'm going to make my share of mistakes, but I'm going to have her to kind of lean on.

Q. Walk me through, I don't know if anybody has asked you, walk me through the emotions when Lisa told you that she was retiring and then you got the call?

JAN JENSEN: You know, I think happy and sad. When she told us, it was kind of a little bit of a shock, because again, all my friends that coach, sometimes the ones you're closest to, she's got to know, what's her time frame. We don't. She doesn't really know. But I think probably the shocker to everybody was the distance after the season.

So when that happened, it was just -- you're unsteady for a second. It's a lot of years together. 33 years of trying to do something together.

But I think both things can be really true. You can be really, really happy, and I was so happy and fired up for the possibility, especially when Beth called me up and said, hey, do you want to visit, and I said how fast, yes, can I get there. But at the same time, you can also -- almost a mourning of what was because it's like anything in life. It's a beautiful chapter closed. Whatever those milestone moments, you graduate from high school, you graduate from college, your first job and then you get that next promotion.

So it's the ability to experience the realm of emotions. But for me, what I just feel so blessed with, the overriding emotion has always been gratitude, and that's what I've felt. I'm so grateful for all that was and just incredibly excited for hopefully all that will be.

To be able to do it again at a place that I love and with people I love and respect and with a university that believes in me and us and then our fan base, just gratitude. I felt that same way when the season ended, and it just has continued to carry over.

Q. Was it different talking to Lucy Olsen just because she had already entered the portal and then she commits, she thinks Lisa is going to lead the charge? Was that a pretty easy conversation? You mentioned being alongside Lisa for such a long time. Where does that loyalty derive from? What's sculpted you into having that quality?

JAN JENSEN: I'll take the Lucy question first. Certainly. I really felt like the first step was our team, when we met with our team. That had a lot of emotions, too. Going back, it's happy and sad. The team needed a little time. But then they're just great young women. Lisa has earned this moment. So she should celebrate that, but also, whoa, you're sad.

But we had such a good rapport that they were -- we all had a process, and then when they processed, everybody was on board. So that was the first thing. It was just that first day, and I think any transition in athletes, any coach will tell you that it's crucial that first day. You're just like going, the intensity of it.

Then of course the very next call was to Lucy, and she was great. Disappointed, yes, but I think when the recruiting process, when it's done well, they get to know everybody that's part of the process, and the way Lisa has always led, she's done tremendous things, but she's always made us all feel a part of it, and that's how she's always recruited. That's how I've recruited, and that's how I'll continue to recruit.

I think Lucy felt that, and after that initial shock, her mom and dad were great of, wow, this is a great place, the culture remains. I've been with this university and system for so long.

After the initial couple minutes, by the end of that conversation, she was great. I'm very, very grateful for that. Certainly, with our team, they were great. The incoming freshmen, our players are helping them through it, too. It was really a pretty cool, beautiful thing, and I'm so grateful for that.

I know you talked about loyalty. I was brought up by some really pretty awesome people. My mom, my dad, I had two grandmothers. I had my high school coach was phenomenal, my teachers. I just had a nucleus that were faith-based and did the right thing. I knew no other way.

Then navigating life, I had some incredible friends and people in my corner, champions, Dr. Don Adams. He's VP at Drake, one of my biggest mentors. Any of the Drake people will know, he was Mr. Enthusiastic and Mr. Positive.

Maybe it's a little bit innate, but I have really had a lot of people in my corner, and I just really believe in doing the right thing all the time. Integrity is big and loyalty is big. I just think this type of hire -- some of my friends will be like, you've paid your dues. Let me tell you what, if you get to pay your dues on this type of a ride, it's not a bad deal. But I'd like to look at it as more of a reward for loyalty.

I think if you continue to do that in life -- it doesn't always work out. Had this not worked out, boy, what a ride I was on, right? But when you do get something that you've dreamed about, that reward for loyalty is a much better way in my opinion to look at it than, oh, you paid your dues. I made a choice, and it was a fabulous one to stick with these three.

Q. I wanted to ask you about recruiting. You've been kind of a lead recruiter. You're out there a lot. You're going to probably have to adjust some of that. What is that going to be like for you to let go of some of that and trust your assistants, and have you thought about what that process is going to be like?

JAN JENSEN: You know, I really haven't because recruiting has always been important but it's really intensified the last years. We have a little bit bigger footprint.

I think two things happened since the Megan Gustafson era. We got more on the national scene. Then enter Caitlin and the expansion of the Big Ten.

Now the Big Ten is in a place where it doesn't seem -- if you're leaving California, it doesn't seem as far away anymore because, hey, it's part of the Big Ten.

We've been busting it in a lot of different ways the last five years. Let me tell you, Raina and Abby and Lisa, all of us, we just do what you must do if you want to chase greatness.

I know -- Abby yesterday, I got an email before I had even processed it, because Lisa won't be on the road. You can elevate recruiting rules for this unique situation. She already told me where Tania was going, where Raina was going, what I was going to be doing and she told me this was the best situation because we were only going to miss two kids. So how lucky am I? Abby had that all figured out before I even thought about it, and recruiting starts Friday, I believe.

So again, it goes back to big change, a lot remains the same.

I think that I'll continue to recruit just as hard but just in a

different way, and now I'll just be dependent on a little bit more who Abby tells me because Lisa a lot of times never had the time to get to that level of calling. We were trying to figure out who she was going to be needing to spend her time with, and I trust Abby unequivocally when she's going to need me for those 20 minutes out of my day that it's going to be worthwhile, and I don't have any, any worries that.

Q. I wanted to ask you about how hectic chaotic Monday might have been for you once the announcement came in. This is a new era for recruiting over the last couple of years where all of your players are now available via the transfer portal. You have commits, some high-level commits plus incoming players. How long did it take you to make sure that you had everything secure, and did you have a chance to even enjoy the news at that time?

JAN JENSEN: That's a great question. I would say that was probably one of the most intense days that I had ever experienced. It had every emotion of elation but also that uncertainty. I wanted to be -- you're thrusting into the head coach role, but my best friend is also retired. Sometimes you just want to give her a hug and understand this is where -- I know, it's difficult, but Lisa and I were on the phones trying to just explain that, yeah, it's different, but we're going to be okay.

So we've kind of come through -- because you don't want the news to leak because we certainly wanted Lisa to have her moment without one of you guys leaking it or covering or scooping each other, to give everybody a fair opportunity at that news.

We kind of had a little time frame. We knew we were up against the clock, though, because we knew when that release came out but you had to take it because people find out they're going to process in different ways. So it was intensity, and you're balancing we had a couple of our phones going and trying to just assure and reassure and took as much time with everybody as needed, reach recruit, and I can't thank the parents enough. These young women that are going to play for us. I can't thank the young women themselves enough; they were so gracious, and they processed with us, and by the end of the day, including our players, I think I probably talked for -- geez, from 3:00pm until about 10:30pm nonstop of just trying to make sure everybody could ask as many questions and feel comfortable.

It was intense, but when we got there little by little, I just am so thankful for everybody's belief. But it was, I will say, to date, that type of organizational day and what was at stake, probably one of the most intense days, but

thankfully ended up being one of the most gratifying days.

Q. Never a bad day to get your dream job, but for you to start your head coaching era in this era of the game and seeing it grow the way it has, what does it mean to you to step to the top of a program that's been at the forefront of a lot of that?

JAN JENSEN: I just think really honored. What I think is great about it is I'm in the trenches. This is going to be a different rebuilding year. But I think everybody is also ready for it. Our players, our staff. Lisa would have been, too, because the beauty of what we do -- it would be great if you could always be the New York Yankees, when they just won all the titles, hitting home runs, smacking it all the time. That doesn't happen as much anymore.

But the fun part of what coaching is you get to have an era like we had, and that's just fun in all the different challenges, and then you have a player like Caitlin that is just challenging and awesome in every regard, and you got to have her and got to figure it out.

But then when that graduates, you get another challenge. In this age of what's happening, I'm very thankful for a boss that understands -- we're in a new ballgame, folks. You can recruit and you can have your normal process, but we're in NIL. That's the fact of the matter. Our fans have been great, but that's part of the gig now.

Understanding you want to lean into that. You want to be at the forefront of figuring that out.

There's one way of looking at it. It can be daunting and it's hard. But if you love it -- as fans you love it, journalists when you cover it, it's a new game. So I am so excited to be part of that new game with Beth and figuring out how do we navigate it, how do we continue to chase greatness. It's daunting, yes. You can look at it that way. But I look at it as exciting in everything that is changing, how can we do it the best.

We've got a great start with our fans, our super fans, people who are supporting the NIL, open-minded, because the game is going to change, and it's going to change a lot, athletics overall. So I'm really proud of getting to be a part of it. I'm just excited about the changes this year and going through a reset, and now we say we're going to do it the old-fashioned way. Now we don't have someone that shoots from the parking lot. They actually shoot from the three-point line. We're going to go figure that out all over again.

