

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Coach Teri Moren

Press Conference

TERRI MOREN: Well, good afternoon. It's great to see everybody. Before I start, I just want to thank Scott and Jeremy Gray and Megan and J.D. for organizing this event this afternoon.

Thank you also to our sponsors and just friends of Indiana that are here today in support of men's and women's basketball. You guys know that we count on you in so many ways, and we're grateful for your friendship and loyalty and certainly your support that you give both men's and women's basketball.

We are excited. I can't believe another season is here. It is exciting. It's always exciting, football, but basketball is right around the corner certainly, and we have a lot to look forward to.

Although we're going to be different in many ways, we have some big shoes to fill. But I have a terrific staff that has done an outstanding job of recruiting.

We are looking forward to the seven holdovers in addition to the seven new faces that we have in our program. I think we have some interesting pieces. I think we have some exciting pieces.

But as I mentioned, we certainly have some big shoes to fill with the graduation of Aleksa Gulbe and Nikki and Ali Patberg.

But we're excited. Tomorrow will be practice number 11 for us. We haven't officially started. We had a little bit of a slow summer, just some off-season injuries, recoveries, so we're a little bit behind in terms of where we were a year ago.

But we're catching up quickly.

But I love this group. They're great people, great students. You guys will, I think, be excited to support them and watch them play once again.

Yeah, we're excited for next Thursday to get here when we



officially open up, and I think you guys have a lot to look forward to with this group.

Q. Kind of a bigger picture question. Everybody talks about transfers now with the portal, the immediate eligibility rule. You've had success for a while in adapting transfers into kind of the broader equation for success. What in your mind works, at least for you, in terms of from the process of identifying maybe a need and saying we're going to pursue a transfer for that as opposed to a high school player, to finding that player, and bringing them into a program in a way that allows them to sort of impact very quickly?

TERI MOREN: Well, I think you hit it on the head. I think for us it's always been about our needs. I look back at when Tyra Buss and Amanda Cahill were here and we knew that their graduation was approaching, and so we had to fill those with two transfers, Brenna Wise and Ali Patberg.

I think we just forecast with graduation, with our needs that we have. But we have, we've had a lot of success with transfers.

I think the key with all that is that the kids that do decide to transfer, they want to transfer to a place where they're going to play and they're going to have an impact and a significant place on the team.

We're not interested in becoming a program that has all transfers. I think we feel like we have to have a mixture of still the four-year high school kid, which we have several of those.

But I think one thing that we have seen with the transfers is that it gives you immediate experience, college experience, which is always good, especially when you're trying to build off of but also sustain the level of success that we've had.

You have to have, I think, a combination of the two, but the experience certainly matters.

Q. Last year depth off the bench sometimes seemed like a problem. Do you think with the transfers and the



freshmen coming in, you'll be able to go to your bench more often this season if you need to?

TERI MOREN: I certainly hope so. As I mentioned in my earlier statement, yeah, I think we have some interesting pieces. I think we have a lot of really good talent.

Any time that we have four freshmen, the key with that is just the experience piece, but it's also -- the only way you get experience is by playing; I realize that. But I do think that there is going to be a moment where you'll probably see us use our depth more than we did a year ago. We're excited about that.

We've always been a program that's wanted to be able to have a lot of pieces, different kind of pieces on the floor. Last year didn't lend itself to that. But I think that with the combination of the four freshmen but also the transfers that we have, you're going to see --

You know, but I will say this. One of the things about Nikki and Ali and even Aleksa. We talk about this, they were workhorses. You could put them out there for a lot of minutes. And I don't know that -- certainly you have Mackenzie. Grace is a workhorse. But I think we welcome the idea of being able to have having depth, and we're excited about it.

Q. You've mentioned Ali and the graduated seniors a few times and how different you're going to be. The group that you have now, how much has this group learned how to play around expectations and manage expectations, and how different is that going to be when you have so many new faces in the program?

TERI MOREN: That's a great question. You know, and here's the thing that we've tried not to do, is from day one with this group, is play the comparison game. We're not the team from last year, but we do have some interesting pieces. We have some talent that we're excited about.

I think it's part of the recruiting process. Certainly with our freshmen, they understand. They've watched us, the level of success that we've had.

But I think with adding Syd and Sarah and Alyssa, they're vets. They're experienced. They understand the expectation. They understand the level of success we've enjoyed.

So I think more than anything, it's in the recruiting process that we talk about the expectations, the standards. It's one thing to climb. It's another thing to sustain.

We're pretty clear on that in the recruiting process, what

our expectations are, and how we want to continue to build off the success, but there's still more that we want to accomplish. We have goals that we have yet to accomplish, right, like winning the Big Ten championship.

Those are the things, though, that the expectations will be high, but those are the things that will keep us hungry and will keep that invisible chip that we've always played with that we haven't -- even though we have the goals, we haven't achieved the goals quite yet.

Q. Chloe Moore-McNeil has had wonderful development for the past few years and she's going to be here speaking today. What kind of impact do you expect she'll have being one of your returners?

TERI MOREN: Chloe I had a great summer. She had a fantastic summer. The expectations for her a year ago were big for her to come off of our bench and be a scoring power for us, but also be a great defender, which she was for us.

The expectations, I think Chloe has them for herself, that she wants to come in and do what she can do to help her team.

But I think, again, based on what she was able to do this summer, she's come back, she's stronger, she's shooting more consistently outside the arc.

But I think she's excited for her junior year, without question, and I'm excited for her, because a kid like Chloe who's spent time on the bench and has been in every practice just trying to get a little bit better, a little bit better every day, and then now she's to a point where she has that opportunity in front of her to not only start but play big minutes for us.

Q. This is the year the Big Ten has announced an alliance with another conference to emphasize attention on Title IX. Can you reflect a little bit about the changes you've seen in your lifetime that Title IX brought about? You don't go back to the beginning-beginning because you had just been born, I think, but in terms of your game and what you've seen and how it's affected your coaching, too.

TERI MOREN: Well, it's changed, as you mentioned. I could go into probably greater detail. Just playing for somebody like Lin Dunn, who was my college coach, and listening to some of her stories, and then fast forwarding to where we are now and everything that has changed and then continues to change.

The needle is still quickly moving for our female athletes,



and in a lot of really great ways. I think what I've always said in regards to Title IX is -- I think I speak for all female athletes, is that there should be -- when you talk about sports universally, there should be no female/male sports. We're all athletes. I think the one thing we have just wanted and we're still yearning for is that everybody sees us as that, just an athlete, not a female athlete, not a male athlete, just an athlete.

But we have benefitted. I think we'll continue to benefit. Things will continue to change with time.

Maybe they're not changing as quickly as some of us females would like, but I do think that there has been great change, even from two years ago with the Final Four, as we did see in the NCAA Tournament. They'll continue to change.

I'm hopeful -- I don't know if I'll be coaching at the time, but there's going to be more changes that are going to happen in our game, not just women's basketball, but I think for female -- we have more exposure than we've ever had, not just in women's basketball but soccer and all the other women's sports that are out there.

It's not that we're knocking on the door anymore. I think we've broken through the door. But certainly more exposure to women in sport is something that we've wanted for some time, and I think it'll continue to improve.

We're just excited now that you can turn on the TV and watch a women's basketball game. You can turn on the TV and watch a women's soccer game. For the longest time, even growing up as a young athlete, I didn't have that opportunity to see women's basketball on TV.

Now we have that opportunity.

We've made great strides. There's no question. But we'll continue to, I think, push the envelope.

Q. How big was it to have Grace come back this year, and how has her role changed internally within this team over the off-season?

TERI MOREN: I don't know that her role has changed. She's been such a significant part of why we've had the success we've had. Obviously for her to come back was a really big deal, even though if you know Grace, there was very little fanfare when she decided to make that decision.

As a matter of fact, I'm not even -- she didn't even tell me. I think she needed to show up for something for Megan, and I think Megan said, does this mean you're going to return? And she's like, oh, yeah. I'm coming back. So

she's like, well, does Coach know? She's like, I don't know if I've told Coach or not, but you can tell her.

That's typical Grace Berger in terms of just how humble she is, what a competitor she is, how much she loves Indiana. I think that's what it really signifies is her love for this place and the love that she has, I think, for her teammates.

If anybody continues to remind me that we still have a lot of goals that we haven't accomplished yet, it's Grace. If you ask Grace, we haven't done much, and I love that. I love that about her because of her competitiveness and the spirit she has.

She obviously has left a mark, but I think she has her sights set on still winning a championship here.

Q. You're in front of the five National Championship banners for the men behind you. You're on stage. You've been to other programs around the state. You've coached. You've played other places. How excited are you to see this full house, that you've helped build this program? And number two, what does IU mean to you on the basketball front and you building this program?

TERI MOREN: Well, I think it means, again -- it's hard to believe that I'm going into my 10th season here, first. It just reminds me of when we arrived here nine years ago that what we set out to do was -- this is the -- the tradition has always -- and I've said this in the most respectful kind of way, the tradition has always been on the men's side of it.

So what we set out to do when we arrived here was we wanted to build our own tradition of winning and filling this place up with not just women's basketball fans but basketball fans. I think we've been able to accomplish that.

I think it started out as fans that just wanted to come watch the women's game, and then because of the success that we've had, it kind of has trickled through the Bloomington community and Indianapolis community that, oh, not only do they have a great men's program, they also have this great women's program, and let's go check them out.

Now you've seen the increase in our fan base, the excitement that certainly is here in Bloomington for women's basketball.

So what it means for us is I've managed to surround myself with a great staff. Our staff has done a fantastic job, like I mentioned, of getting the right kind of players that fit us, and we're putting a product on the floor that everybody,

one, appreciates, and two, really enjoys watching.

What we set out to do, we certainly have changed the way that people on the outside have always looked at this program.

That's what's most exciting, that there's a buzz about Indiana women's basketball.

Q. You've achieved tremendous things here, done things that nobody else has done here as a coach, back to back Sweet 16s with an Elite 8. Have you identified what are the things you need to focus on to take the next steps?

TERI MOREN: Well, I think for us, a year ago we had the right pieces. We had all the pieces we needed. The one thing that you can never control is injuries. I think Mackenzie Holmes, losing her for a large part of the season, and once Mack got hurt, she wasn't quite 100 percent.

So I think in retrospect, when we look back at what could have been different, if Mack would have been 100 percent healthier, could we have won a Big Ten championship? I think we could have.

So we have, once again, I think all the pieces in place. Anytime that you're combining -- again, we lost a significant -- we lost three starters from a year ago, and now we have to figure out how to combine the seven holdovers with the seven new faces.

Do we have enough pieces? I think we'll have enough firepower. I think defensively we've always been at the top of this league in terms of the grittiness and the toughness.

How our chemistry -- that's the thing that has set us apart. I think our chemistry has just been off the charts the last two seasons, so it's going to be up to us in terms of how quickly we can build relationships with one another, how quickly our chemistry can be, once again, really, really good.

Because we feel like as a staff, we certainly have the pieces; now we've got to put it all together. I think the things -- some of those things that you can't control are the injury bug, but we feel really confident that if we can stay healthy and come together relatively quickly, we'll have a chance.

Q. There are two players in particular I wanted to ask about. First, Sarah. She shot and attempted more threes per game than pretty much your entire team. I'm wondering how you think she fits in with the way

your team has played the last several years. And then Yarden, just what have you seen from her since she got in here, and how quickly do you think she could be making an impact?

TERI MOREN: Well, we know this with Sarah. Sarah came into the hall last year and stuck seven threes on us, so we know that she likes this gym, and she's told me that. So we're excited certainly about her firepower.

A year ago she was one of the best three-point shooters in the country, so I think she's going to fit in really well, with our ability to find her.

I'm not sure it surprised us, but with Minnesota her role was certainly to shoot a lot of shots beyond the arc, but she's been inside of practice and she's been a great facilitator.

One of the things that we were curious about was how interested she would be in defending because you know that's such a huge part of who we are, and she's been very interested defender for us, and she's probably been better than what we thought she would be, which is good.

Then Yarden, she's interesting, because she's a big -- I guess a big guard, point forward, because you'll see her at -- you might see her at the point, you might see her at the stretch 4. She can play a lot of different positions. She has a natural instinct. She'll do stuff that we don't necessarily practice. She just is a natural basketball player.

It's been kind of fun to watch her.

I think the thing with freshmen always is the pace and also the schedule of being a student here at Indiana and also figuring out how to manage her time. She's a kid that loves to be in the gym, as well, and she's been fantastic.

But I do think that she has an opportunity, I will say, to be a very, very special player.

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